Letters

Letters written from 1964 to 1965 and 1970/71
Miscellaneous
2 Chapters
Year published:

Letters

Chapter #1

Chapter title: **Letters** to Ma Yoga Sohan

THESE FIVE **LETTERS**, SELECTED FROM MORE THAN 100 WRITTEN BY OSHO TO MA YOGA SOHAN FROM 1964 TO 1965, HAVE BEEN PRINTED IN THE HINDI PUBLICATION, PATH KE PRADEEP. AN ADDITIONAL TWENTY **LETTERS** HAVE ALSO BEEN TRANSLATED FOR THE BOOK, A CUP OF TEA.
(OTI 16 JULY 1990)

Beloved Sohan,
Choosing between truth and oneself, the one who chooses truth finds truth and his own being. And the one who chooses himself loses both.
Man has to lose himself before he becomes the truth. No one moves into truth without I paying this price. One's very existing is the barrier. One's very self veils the truth. The only obstruction is this vision. . . this seeing the world from the confined vision of "ego." Except this "ego vision,"

nothing separates man from the truth. Becoming the "I" is man's downfall. He falls down only in the gravitation of the "I", and only in losing the "I" does he rise above, into this blessed existence. To be the "I" is to be lower. To become the "no-I" is to rise above.
But what appears like losing I is in reality not losing -- it is gaining. The identity which you will lose is not your identity -- it is only a dream, and the identity you find when you lose it is the truth.
When it completely loses itself within the earth, the seed sprouts and becomes a tree.

Beloved Sohan,
One finds life only from knowing that which is inside one's being. One who doesn't know this is surrounded every moment by death and the fear of death.
A sadhu was asked by his friends, "If wicked people attack you, what will you do?" He said, "I will go sit inside my own strong fort." This conversation reached the ears of the enemies. Then one day the enemies surrounded him while he was alone and said, "O sadhu! Please tell us, where is your strong fort?" The sadhu began laughing and then, placing a hand on his heart, said, "This is my fort. No attack can ever be made on it. The body can be destroyed, but that which is inside cannot be. This is my very fort. My only security is to know my way there. "
The person who doesn't know this strong fort his entire life is insecure. His life is surrounded by enemies every moment. Such a person has not yet found a shelter for peace and security. And those who search outside for that shelter, search in vain, because it is inside.

Only by being established in your being does the real acquaintance with life happen, because the periphery which is outside this center is created by death.

Beloved Sohan,
Man is born in slavery. We are born as slaves unto ourselves. We come into the world with chains of desire. Very subtle chains bind us.
Slavery comes with birth. It is given by nature. We don't have to earn it. Man finds himself enslaved. But freedom has to be earned. Only those who strive and struggle for it attain it. One has to pay the price for freedom. Whatever is valuable in life cannot be gotten free of cost. To acquire slavery from nature is not a misfortune. The misfortune is not to earn freedom. To be born a slave is not bad, but to die only as a slave is certainly bad. Nothing brings significance and fulfillment in life unless you achieve your inner freedom. Those who are imprisoned by desires, those who have not known the free sky of awakening, they have life, but they remain deprived of knowing life. There is no difference between the lives of birds imprisoned in cages and souls Lying imprisoned in desires. One enters into the world of real life only when intelligence is free of desire. If you want to know the divine, master yourself. Winning the divine kingdom is not for those who are defeated by themselves.

Beloved Sohan,
If one's eyes are open, then this whole life is a school. And one who is hungry to learn, learns from every person and from every situation. And remember, one who does not

learn in this way, learns nothing in life. Emerson has said, "Each person I meet is better than me at one thing or another. I can learn something from him."
I remember a story. It happened in Mecca. A barber was giving someone a haircut. Just then the Sufi fakir, Junnaid, came in and said, "Can you cut my hair in the name of Allah?" Just hearing Allah's name, the barber said to his regular customer, "Friend, please just wait a little, I cannot cut your hair right now. I have to attend to that fakir for allah. Allah's work comes first." After this he cut Junnaid's hair with great love and devotion, then respectfully bade him farewell.
A few days later when someone had given Junnaid money, he went to give some to the barber. But the barber wouldn't take any money, saying, "Have you no shame? You had said to cut your hair in the name of Allah, not for money!" And his whole life Junnaid used to say to his disciples, "It was from a barber that I learned unselfish love and devotion."
Even in the lowest, vast messages are hidden. One who knows how to uncover them, becomes wise. Move with awareness in life and every experience brings intelligence. One who remains unconscious, returns even the light that comes to his door.

Beloved Sohan,
If you want to attain the divine, Learn to die. Have you not seen that when the seed dies, it becomes a tree?
Someone went to visit a Baul mystic. He was absorbed in singing his song. Neither his eyes seemed to be seeing this world, nor did it feel as if his soul was present. He was

somewhere else -- in some other world, in some other form.
When his song stopped, and it seemed his consciousness was returning, the visitor asked, "How do you feel liberation can be attained?" The sweet-spoken mystic said. "Only by means of death. "
I said this to someone yesterday. He asked, "By death?" I said, "Yes, by death while living. Only one who dies to everything else, awakens and becomes alive to the divine."
There is no art greater than learning to die while living. I call that art: meditation. One who lives as if he is dead will certainly know whatever is essential in life.

Letters
Chapter #2
Chapter title: Letters to Ma Dharm Jyoti

FIRST PUBLISHED IN OTI 1 SEPTEMBER 1990

Beloved Dharm Jyoti,
Love. Don't ever repress the mind.
Repression is a disease.
And that which is repressed will never be completed.
It comes back again and again to attack you.
The mind is to be understood.
Finally, only understanding the mind becomes the solution.
Repression is merely postponement of diseases.
The path is neither in indulgence nor repression.

The path is in understanding.
Hence know your own mind in all its forms.
Live consciously.
Live wakefully.
Then what is meaningless disappears on its own.
And its energy is transformed into the meaningful.
Otherwise we create a vicious circle for ourselves.

A so-called saint was sitting alone before his dhuni,
his holy fire pit. Someone came by to test him, saying,
"Babaji, is there any fire in the dhuni?"
The saint said, "There is none."
He said, "Please stir it, perhaps there are coals."
Raising his eyebrows the saint said angrily,
"I told you there is no fire."
The man provoked him again, saying,
"Babaji, surely there must be a few sparks?"
Leaning forward on his fire tongs the saint said,
"What kind of idiot are you anyway?"
Then the man said, "Babaji, I see a few sparks."
The saint said, "What? Am I blind?"
The man said, "A few flames become visible now!"
Then the saint completely lost his senses --
his eyes filled with sparks and his voice with flames.
Picking up his fire tongs he started chasing after that man
to beat him.
Fleeing for his life the man said,
"Babaji, look, now the fire has taken flame totally!"

Only a repressed fire can burst into flames.
And a repressed fire can burst into flames at any moment.

Repression is self-enmity and a self-deception.
In the middle, between indulgence and repression is the door to peace, to liberation, to strength, to truth, to samadhi.
Search for this door.

September 7, 1970

Beloved Dharm Jyoti
Love. Sa'adi has written:
We were on a long journey. The route was rarely traveled and filled with innumerable troubles.
A Sufi dervish had also joined us -- he hadn't a single coin with him, nor anything else for that matter. We were all on camels, but he traveled on foot.
Nevertheless, his joy knew no limits and he went on saying: "I am not a load on any camel -- nor is any camel a load on me. I am neither anyone's master, nor anyone's slave. I have no worries of the past, no worries of the future. The present is enough for me. My life is just moment to moment. Fully I breathe -- fully I live life."
But the most worried among us, a businessman, advised him to return. He explained the difficulties ahead. He related his experiences of journeys in the past.
And when the dervish didn't listen to him he said, "by your own choice you are going into the mouth of death with little food and the exhaustion of traveling on foot, you are certainly going to die."
But the fakir just went on Laughing -- he kept on singing his song and moving ahead.
Every day the journey became more difficult.

All our faces were filled with lines of worry and despair.
The businessman had gone almost completely insane.
But the fakir went on laughing and singing:
"Fully I breathe -- fully I live life."
And then each and every step of the journey became impossible.
The words of that experienced traveler began to seem right to us all.
The journey became a total nightmare.
But the fakir went on singing his songs.
The radiance of his face increased with each difficulty.
In his eyes, flowers of an unearthly joy seemed to blossom.
And one day the businessman died from these extreme hardships.
And the dervish standing near the dead body of the businessman said: "Beloved! I have not died from the hardships of foot travel -- and you have died riding comfortably on a camel? Fools burn lamps during the day, and at night they wonder why they have no light!"

February 21, 1971

Beloved Dharm Jyoti
Love. God is calling each and every moment.
But this mind of ours is busy with itself.
Unless our minds become unoccupied we will not be able to hear his voice.
Only the unoccupied mind is meditation.
As we become empty -- silent -- wordless, his music fills our being to the brim.
Be silent -- and know.

Many candidates were invited to interview for a position as wireless operator at a telegraph office.
They stood in a long line outside the office waiting for their names to be called.
But that waiting was not silent.
Conversations were going on, and either outside or inside, all were lost in their own thoughts.
Just then, a man standing at the very back left the line and went into the telegraph office.
Perhaps no one saw him go.
People saw him only later, when he came out carrying an appointment letter in hand saying, "I have been appointed to the position advertised in the papers.
So for you there is no need to stand in line here, you can go home."
A great hubbub arose when they heard this.
They shouted slogans like: "Favoritism," "Kill him."
People started complaining, "When this man had already been selected what was the need to call all of us here? "
But a big official from the telegraph office came out and said, "Your conclusion is wrong.
This person was appointed only because he successfully completed the test.
Through a loud speaker on top of the telegraph office we broadcasted in telegraph signals: 'Whoever understands this message, immediately come inside your appointment letter is ready.' But if you were occupied with your conversations and couldn't hear the tapping, what fault is that of ours?"

Ah! One day won't God say the same to each of us? So many are his calls -- but amidst all our noise, has not his call become like the tapping of that telegraph signal? Be silent -- and know.

October 17, 1970

Beloved Dharm Jyoti
Love. One night a king was dreaming. He dreamt that a king he had known was in heaven and a mystic he had known was in hell.
Naturally, the king was shocked. And in the dream itself he asked: "What is the meaning of this? Why have their places been switched?" An unknown voice responded: "The king is in heaven because he was always seeking out mystics and sitting in satsang with them. And the mystic is in hell because he didn't do anything his whole life except chase after kings."

February 2O, 1971

The Earthen Lamps

59 **Letters** written from 1967
Miscellaneous
1 Chapter
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Collection of Lecture Talks and Stories from His Lectures. Also called "Pointing the Way"?

1.

I have heard a story. Thousands of years ago, a town with temples of gods got submerged in the sea. The bells of those drowned temples are still ringing. It is possible that the stroke of water makes them ring. Or, they keep ringing on account of the fish running here and there striking them. Be it as it may, the bells ring even today; and even today, their sweet music can be heard on the sea-shore.

I also wanted to hear that music. Therefore, I went in search of that sea. After several years of wandering, at last I did reach that sea-shore. But, behold what was there was the loud tumult of the sea. The strokes waves, after striking on the rocks, were resounding manifold in that lonely place. Neither was there any music nor were the ringing bells of the temples. I kept listening intently on the But there on the shore was nothing, the sound of breaking waves.

Even so I waited there. In fact, I had forgotten the way back. Now that unknown, uninhabited sea-shore itself was going to be my grave.

And then, even the thought of listening to the bells gradually disappeared. I settled down on the shore of that sea.

Then one night, suddenly I found the bells of submerged temples ringing; and their sweet music started filling my life with joy.

On hearing that music I got out of my sleep and since then I have not been able to sleep again. Now somebody is constantly awake within me. Sleep has vanished for ever. And life has been filled with light; because where there is no sleep, there is no darkness.
And I am happy. Nay, I have myself become the happiness incarnate; because how could sadness exist where there was the music of God's temple?
Do you also want to go near that sea shore? Do you also want to hear the music of the submerged temples of God? Let us then go. Let us move within ourselves. One's heart itself is that sea; and in its depth is the town of the submerged temples of God.
But only those who are, in all respects, calm and concentrated are able to hear the music of those temples. How could this music be heard where there is the loud conflict of thought and desire? Even the desire to find it becomes an obstacle in finding.

2.
In one dark night, I was looking at the stars in the sky. The whole town was asleep. I was feeling very compassionate towards those sleeping men. After a day's hard work, poor chaps must have been dreaming about fulfillment of their unfulfilled desires. In dreams they live and in dreams they sleep. They see neither the sun nor the moon nor the stars. In fact, the eyes that see the dreams cannot see that which is there. It is absolutely essential that the dust of dreams should disappear before you can see the truth.
As the night was advancing towards darkness, stars in the sky were increasing. Slowly, the entire sky got glittered on

account of them. And not only the sky, I myself got filled up with their silent beauty. Does not the sky of the soul get filled up with the stars on seeing the stars in the sky? In reality, man gets filled up with what he sees. He who sees the small, gets filled up with the small; he who sees the large, gets filled up with the large. Eyes are the entrance to the soul. Sitting against a tree, I was just lost in the sky, when from behind someone placed his cold and dead hand on my shoulder. The sounds of his feet were also heard by me. They were also not like the sounds of a living being, and his hand was so lifeless that even in the darkness it took me no time to understand the thoughts in his eyes. The contact of his body had brought even the winds of his mind up to me. The person was living and young. But his life had taken leave of him long ago; and the youth of life had perhaps never come his way.

We both sat down under the stars. I had taken his lifeless hands into my own so that they may become slightly warmer and the heat of my life may also flow into them. Possibly he was alone and love could bring him back to life.

Without doubt, it was not desirable to speak at that time and therefore I kept silent. Sometimes heart finds nearness in silence and the wounds, which words cannot fill up, are healed. Silence can cure them too. Words and sounds are a disturbance and an obstacle in comprehending the full music.

The night was silent and became quiet. That silent music caught us both. He was no longer unfamiliar to me. Even in him I was there. Then his stone-like inactivity came to an end, and his tears gave the news that he was melting. He

was weeping and his entire body was trembling. The currents of what was weeping in his heart were touching the threads of his body. He kept on weeping, weeping, weeping; and then said: "I want to die. I am extremely poor and disappointed. I have absolutely nothing with me".
I remained silent for sometime more and then slowly told him a story. I said "Friend, I am reminded of a story, A young man told a beggar: 'God has taken away everything from me. I have no other course except death'."
Are you not the same young man?
That beggar told the young man: "I see a big hidden treasure with you. Will you sell it? If you sell it. you will gain everything and God will also be saved from bad name".
Are you or are you not the same young man, I do not know. But I am the same beggar and it appears as if the story is repeating itself.
The young man was surprised and may be you are also getting surprised. He said: "Treasure? I have not even a penny with me."
After this the beggar started laughing and said: "Come along. Let us go to the king. The king is very clever. He always keeps a deep eye on the hidden treasures. He will definitely purchase your treasure. Even in the past I have taken many a seller of the hidden treasures to him."
That young man was not able to understand. For him the entire talk of the beggar was a puzzle. Even then he started with me towards the palace of the king. On the way, the beggar told him: "There are a few things which should be settled in advance so that there should be no quarrel before the king. That king is the one who will not leave a thing,

whatever its cost, if he likes it. Therefore, it is also necessary to know whether you are ready or not to sell that thing?"
That young man said: "What treasure? What things?"
The beggar said: "For instance, your eyes? What will you charge for them? I can get you upto Rs.50,000/- for them from the king? Is that amount sufficient? Or, like your heart and mind? For them you can get even a lakh each."
That young man was surprised; and felt that the beggar was mad. He said: "Have you gone mad? Eyes? Heart? Mind? What is it all that you are talking about? I cannot sell them at any cost. And why I alone? Nobody can sell them".
The beggar started laughing and said: "Have I gone mad or you? When you have so many valuable things which you cannot sell even for lakhs, then why do you pretend to be poor? Use them. That treasure which is not used is empty even when it is full; and what is used is full even when it is empty. God gives treasures, immense treasures; but one has to search and dig them by oneself. There is no wealth bigger than life and one who does not see wealth even in that cannot find it any where else."
The night was past its middle. I got up and I told that young man: "Go and go to sleep; and tomorrow wake up a different man. Life is as we make it. That is man's own creation. We can make it dead or eternal as we like; and this depends on no one else except our own selves. Then, death will follow on its own. There is no need to invite it. Invite life. Call the great Light itself. That you can gain only through hard work, effort, resolve and constant application.

3.

One king was very famous. The good news of his charities had spread far and wide. His humility, renunciation, simple living and simplicity were praised by all people; and the result was that his pride knew no bounds. He was as far away from God as a man could be. How easy it is to rise in the eyes of man but how difficult it is to be near God! And one who is desirous of rising in the eyes of men, invariably falls down in the eyes of God; because he is just the opposite inside of what he appears on the outside. The physical eyes of man cannot enter that depth and therefore he falls to self-deception. But does not his inner sight also reach that depth? In the end, there is no value of the image he creates in the eyes of man. What is valuable is the image that unfolds before his own inner eyes. The same image of man, in greater nakedness, reflects itself in the mirror of God. In the end, what the man is before himself, he is also before God.

The fame of that king went on increasing; but his soul kept on drowning. The fame kept on spreading and the soul kept on shrinking. His branches were spreading but the roots were getting weak.

He had a friend. That friend was the Kubera of the day. Just as the rivers and rivulets meet in the sea, similarly several canals of wealth met in his treasure chest. He was entirely different from his king-friend. He would not part with a penny in the name of charity. He was very infamous.

The king and the rich man both became old. One was filled with pride, the other with remorse. Pride was giving pleasure and remorse was pricking the soul. As the death appeared nearer to the king, he was holding faster to his

pride. He had something to hold. But the remorse of the rich man at last became a revolution in him. It could not be his support. It was necessary to give it up. But let us remember that remorse is also the reverse side of pride, and therefore that is also difficult to leave. Very often when it is turned up, it becomes pride. For the same reason the pleasure-seekers become saints and the greedy, the charitable and the cruel become pitiful. But basically there is no revolution in their souls.

That rich man went to a good teacher. There he told him: "I am perturbed. I am burning in fire. I want peace".

The good teacher asked: "Could you not find peace with so much of wealth, fame, power and ability? '

He said: "No. I have fully realised that there is no peace in wealth."

The good teacher then said: "Go and throw away your all to those from whom you have snatched it. Then you come to me. Come to me after you have become simple and poor."

The rich an did it. When he came back the good teacher asked

"How now?"

He said: "Now I have no support except yourself."

But that good teacher was very strange. We might say he was mad. He turned out that poor rich man out of his hut and closed his doors. The night was dark and the forest was lonely. In that forest there was no other shelter except that hut.

The rich man had thought that he had returned after doing something big. But what was this welcome, what was this reception he got.

The collection of wealth was found useless; but the renunciation of wealth also went waste.
That night he slept under a tree without support. He had now no support, no friend, no home. He had neither wealth nor power; neither collection nor renunciation and when he got up in the morning he found that he was submerged in peace which cannot be described in words. The mind without support finds the support of God without any difficulty.
He ran to fall on the feet of the good teacher. But he found that the good teacher himself fell down on his feet.
That good teacher embraced him and said: ' It is easier to give up wealth but difficult to give up renunciation. But he alone who can give up renunciation can really give up wealth. It is easier to renounce the world but difficult to give up teacher. But he who can give up the teacher also can find the great Teacher. Whether it is the support of wealth or of renunciation, of remorse or of pride of the world or of saintliness, in fact wherever there is support, there is obstruction in the way to God. As soon as the other supports fall off the supreme support is gained. Whether I look out for the support of wealth or of religion, as long as I search for support, I am only searching for protection for the pride. As soon as I give up that support, as soon as I become supportless and unprotected, the mind gets submerged in the basic existence of the self. This is peace, this is salvation, this is Nirvana. Do you want to find something else also?
That man, who was now neither the master of wealth nor poor, said: 'No. The very thought of possession was a mistake. I was lost only on account of that. Whatever is to

be found has already been found. Only in the race of possession the ever-found was lost. Now I do not want peace nor even God. I am also not there, and what exists is peace itself, God and salvation.

4.

I was sitting among a circle of old men. They were all pensioners. and they were busy talking to each other in vain about this world and the other. Otherwise, they called it by the name of a talk on religion. In a way, it was true because what we call scriptures are also full of the same type of worthless gossip. Sometimes, I start feeling that perhaps the so-called scriptures were created by those old pensioners. If religion is something, it is the life itself. What relation has it with useless theories? If religion is something it is the realization of the self. What relation has it with useless gossip?

But the scriptures are all full of words and the minds which are called religious keep on travelling in dreams in the skies. Scriptures and precepts do not allow a passage for the entry of religion in their minds.

What is a religious mind?

My definition of a religious mind is that it should be free from all types of words, precepts and thoughts.

A religious mind is not an imaginary mind. On the contrary, there is no other realization which is more realistic and which stands on the solid base of truth.

I was listening to the discussion of old men with great pleasure, when a saint came there. They were discussing how salvation w as gained, by how much of effort in how many lives. The saint also jumped into this discussion.

Without doubt he had a greater right and therefore his voice was the loudest. They were swearing by the scriptures and nobody was prepared to listen to or to accept the views of the other. One old man was of the opinion that after severe penance of hundreds of lives salvation is gained. Another thought that for salvation penance for hundreds of lives was not at all necessary; that can be gained by the grace of God. A third one said that because non-salvation is an illusion, the question of destroying it with penance does not arise. With one glimpse of knowledge it disappears like the snake that we imagine in a rope.
Then someone asked me: "What do you think?" What could I say? I was hiding myself in a corner lest somebody's eyes should catch me. I have no knowledge of scriptures. Fortunately, I have not made the mistake of going in that direction. Therefore, even when I was asked I kept quiet. But soon after, someone asked again: "Why do you not say something?" Even if I wanted to say something, what could I say? Where there were so many persons to speak I was the only one to listen. Even then I kept quiet. Perhaps my very silence started speaking and at last all of them were attracted to me. Perhaps they were all tired and wanted to rest.

When I was so caught, I had to say something. I told a story: "In a village there was a custom that whenever a young man was married, either he or his side had to spend at least Rs. 5000/- for the marriage. That village was very rich and no marriages were performed there for less. Even in the scriptures of that village this was written. Nobody had read those scriptures, but this was the saying of the

priest of that village. And who could question the priest? He remembered by rote all the scriptures written in some lingua franca of the past, and scriptures have all along been axiomatic. What is there is the truth. What else could be the symbol of truth? To be in the scriptures is the sign of truth.
But it so happened once that a young man performed his marriage with Rs. 500/- only, and his bride also came. Undoubtedly, that young man must have been a revolutionary; otherwise how could he do so? The villagers asked: "How many rupees you spent?" He said : "Five hundred". Then the village Panchayat was called and the Panchs told him, "It is all wrong. A marriage cannot be performed without spending Rs. 5000/-." The young man laughed and said: "Whether a marriage can be performed with Rs. 500/- or not is meaningless You keep on discussing. I have got my wife and I am happy".
After saying so, the young man went away to his house.
I also got up and told those old men "Friends, Good-bye. You carry on your discussions. I will make a move now".

5.

Man is all alone. He is in darkness. He is without support. He is unsafe and afraid. This alone is his worry. The way to get rid of it is religion. Religion is fundamentally the way of working in fearlessness.
But the religions, only in name, are most afraid of the fearlessness itself. Their support and life itself is the 'fear' in the hearts of men. Fear itself is their food and life. The fearlessness is the end of their life. The fear in men has been exploited a good deal, and in this exploitation religions have not been far behind; perhaps they have been

foremost. With the support of fear the supernatural beings exist; with the support of fear does also the god of religions. The supernaturals, supported by fear, have merely threatened men but, even so, this has never been more than a game for their pleasure. But the fear supported God, has killed the man outright. His game has been very costly. Life has got entangled in the nets of fear, and how could pleasure be there where there was fear and fear alone? How could love be there? How could peace be there? How could truth be there? Pleasure is the offshoot of fearlessness. Fear is death. Fearlessness is eternal life.
That the supernaturals live on fear could be understood; but that God should also live on it is very unseemly.
And if God also subsists on fear, then there could be no way to get out of the clutches of the supernaturals.
I say: "God has no relation to fear. Most certainly, under the cover of God, some one else is exploiting this fear. Religion is not in the hands of the religious people. It is said, that whenever a discovery of truth is made the Satan is the first to take hold of it. The souls in which the religion is manifested, and those which deal in religion, are not only different but are basically opposed. Religion has all alone been in the hands of its enemies; and if this fact is not realised while there is time still, the future of man will not be good or worthy of a welcome.
Religion has to be saved not from the irreligious, but from the so-called religious people; and without doubt this job is more difficult and troublesome.
As long as religion is based on fear, it cannot be real religion. God's basis is love. God has no truce with fear. Man needs the god of love.

There is no other way to God except love. Fear is not only wrong, but it is also killing; because where there is fear there is hatred; where there is fear, there love is impossible. Religion wanted to live on fear and therefore its temple gradually got shattered. Temples are for love. Temples of fear are impossible. Fear has no temples; it has only prisons. I ask: "Are the temples of religion, temples or prisons?"

If religion is fear, temples will be prisons. If religion is fear, God himself cannot be more than the chief officer of the Prisons.

What is religion? Fear of sin? of punishment? of hell? or of greed? -- of good deeds, of reward or heaven?

No. Religion is neither fear nor greed. Greed is only an extension of fear.

Religion is fearlessness. Religion is freedom from all fears.

There is an old incident. Two brothers lived in a town. They were the wealthiest in that town. Perhaps the name of the town was the 'Town of Darkness'. The elder brother was very religious. Daily and regularly, he would go to the temple. He would give charities and do good deeds. He would listen to religious discourses and discussions. He would sit in the company of good people and the saints. Because of him there was a gathering of the saints daily in that house. On account of his attention to God and the saints he had become entitled to heavens in the other world. This was that the good men and the saints explained to him, and this was written in the scriptures also because those scriptures were also made by the group of those good men and saints. On the one hand, he exploited wealth and on the other he would give charities and do good things. Heaven

cannot be attained without charities. There is no wealth without exploitation. There is wealth from the opposite of religion and there is religion from wealth. He exploited others, the good men and the saints exploited him; and the exploiters have always been good friends. But he always pitied his younger brother. He was no good at collecting money and consequently was getting unable to collect religion either. His behaviour, full of love and truth, was coming in the way of his reaching God. Then, he was neither going to the temple nor did he know the A, B, C, of the scriptures. His condition was definitely pitiable and his account in the other world was blank. He used to avoid the good men and the saints also, as people would avoid infectious diseases. If the saints entered the house from one gate, he would go out from the other. His religious brother used to request many saints to change the heart of his irreligious brother. But there could be a change only if he would stay near the saints. He would not stay. But one day a full-fledged and a real saint came there. No one knows how many irreligious people he had converted into the religious. He was an adept in the theories of peace, persuasion, threat and division. It was his profession to convert people to religion. It is on such saints that the foundations of religion rest. Otherwise, religion would have disappeared long ago. When the elder brother repeated his request to him also, he said: "Do not worry. That fool will now be in trouble. I will now see that he remembers God. What I say, I always fulfil". Saying so, he took up his stick and accompanied the elder brother. He was a wrestler in the past. Thereafter, finding saintliness as a better profession than wrestling, he became a saint. He caught hold of the

younger brother immediately on arrival. Not only did he catch him, but he felled him down on the ground and sat down on his chest. That young man was not able to understand anything. He was speechless out of surprise. Even so he said: "Sir, what is this?" The saint said: "Change of heart". That young man laughed and said; 'Please leave this aside. Is this a way to change the heart?" Please take care. You may not get hurt in the body; The saint said: "we do not believe in the body; we believe in God. Say 'Ram' and then alone I will leave you. Otherwise, you will find no one worse than I". The saint was very generous and, therefore, in the interest of the young man he descended to the level of thrashing him. That young man said: "What relation is there between fear and God? and does God have a name? I will not say 'Ram' like this whether I live or not" and then he pushed down the saint. After his fall, the saint said: "Wonderful, Wonderful!! You have said what you had to say!!! Even in saying that I will not say 'Ram', you have uttered his name. His brother was very angry with him because the saint was toppled; but he was very much pleased with the saint. He had made his atheist brother utter the name of God. The glory of the name of 'Ram' is so great that uttering his name once even by mistake will take a person beyond the sea of this life. That day he gave a feast to the whole town. After all, his younger brother had turned religious!

6.

Believers in one god have broken the idols of the other god. In truth, it is nothing new. It has been happening all along. Only men are not rivals of one another, even their Gods

are. In fact, the gods that man creates cannot be very much different from what they themselves are. One temple stands against another because one man is opposed to another. One scripture is the enemy of another because one man is the enemy of the other. As the man is, so is his religion. Where the man is, there is his God also. Therefore, religions, instead of fostering friendship, have become the fools of rivalries,; and instead of filling this world with love, they have filled it with the poison of enmity and discord.

I had just returned after hearing the news of the breaking of idols when some of those whose idols had been broken came to me. They were full of very genuine anger. although no anger is good, even then they said their anger was genuine and unless they broke the temples of their opponents they would not rest. It was a question of saving their religion. When I started laughing, they were surprised. Surely, this was not the time to laugh. They were very serious and in their view what else could be more serious than a threat to religion!

I asked those friends: "Do you understand the language of the Satan?" One of them asked: "What language is that?" They understood the language of the scriptures but not that of the Satan. Although without understanding the language of the Satan the scriptures themselves become the scriptures of Satan.

I told them a story:

A boat was going to a distant land. Among other travellers there sat a poor beggar also. Some mischievous persons were teasing that beggar in all ways. When he was sitting in the night-prayer, they thought that at that time he would not

be able to do anything and they started beating his head with shoes. He was in prayer and the tears of love were coming out of his eyes. Then there came a voice from the sky: "My dear, If you say I will upturn the boat". Those persons became nervous. Other travellers were also upset. The recreation was getting costly. They all fell down at the feet of the beggar and started apologizing to him. When the beggar's prayers came to an end he got up and spoke to those men: "Do not be worried". Then he lifted up his face to the sky and said: "My dear God, in what language of the Satan are you talking? If you want to play the game of turning up, turn the intellect of these people. What use will it be to turn over the boat?" There was a voice from the sky once again: "I am very much pleased. You have rightly recognized the fact. The earlier voice was not mine. He who can recognize the voice of Satan can alone recognize my voice also."

7.
"What is the most essential factor in search of truth?
I said: "Courage -- courage to know the reality in the self. To know oneself as one is, is most essential. That is very difficult. But without that there is no understanding of the truth. What else is the greater penance than knowing oneself without cover and in nakedness? But that is the price one has to pay for attainment of truth. From that only commences the desire of man for truth. Being true to the self itself is the manifestation of the intense thirst for truth. How can he, who binds himself to the shore of falsehood, row his boat across the sea of truth? The shore of falsehood will have to be given up. That shore itself is an obstacle to

travel to the truth. That shore itself is the bondage. True, there is safety on that shore and the very desire for safety is the fort of falsehood. In our travel to the truth there should be no love for safety. On the other hand, there should be the unbeatable courage to discover the unknown. He who does not possess the courage to be unsafe, cannot discover the unknown. Without accepting the challenge of being unsafe, no one can either throw off the artificial covers nor can he be free from those convictions which he has put on for safety. Is it not for the sake of safety that we appear what we are not? Are not all these deceptions merely our plans for safety? What are all these civilizations and cultures of ours?The proud looks like the humble; the greedy looks like the renouncer; the exploiter indulges in gifts; a killer has taken up the cover of non-violence; and the minds filled with hatred talk the language of love. This self-deception is very easy. When has acting in dramas been difficult? Then, in the market of culture, the good looking toys have always been sold at cheap rates; but may it be remembered that a bargain which is cheap on the surface proves very costly in the long run, because he who hides himself among the toys gets away and away from the truth. Between truth and himself an unbridgeable gulf is created, because his soul is always afraid of loosing its cover. Then he goes on hiding himself: covers over covers and masks on masks.
Falsehood does not come alone, its armies come with it for its protection. Such a net of falsehood and fear spreads out that it becomes impossible to lift our eyes above it. And how can a person, who suffers from the fear of losing his own artificial masks, muster strength to uncover the vessel containing the truth? That power is gained only by the

courage to uncover himself. A fearful mind is the enemy of the vision of truth. Who is the friend in that direction? Fearlessness is the friend; and fearlessness of mind is gained only by him who himself can laY bare the truth about himself and becomes free from fear. Fear keeps on increasing by covering the self and the soul becomes powerless. But if you uncover yourself and see, then fear gets drowned in the light of that knowledge and you discover new and several sources of power. It is this that I call courage; the power to uncover the self and to know it is courage. That is unavoidable for the attainment of truth. That is the first step towards Brahma. There is a very interesting story: --

A young man reached the hermitage of Rishi Haridrumat Gautam. He wanted to know the truth. He had a desire to know the Brahma. He placed his head on the feet of the Rishi and said, "Oh; Teacher, I have come in search of truth. Be kind to me and teach me the knowledge of Brahma. I am blind and I want light."
The name of that young man was Satyakama.
The Rishi asked him: "Son, what is your Gotra? Who is your father? What is his name?"
That young man had no knowledge of his father. Nor did he know his gotra. He went to his mother, asked her and returned. And what his mother told him he repeated to the Rishi. He said: "Oh! god! I do not know my Gotra. Nor do I know my father. My mother also does not know my father. I asked her, and then she said that in her youth she was playing with many respectable persons and used to please them. She does not know from whom I was born. The name

of my mother is Jabali. Therefore I am Satyakama Jabal. This is what she has asked me to tell you also'!.
Haridrumat was very much moved by the simple true story. He embraced that young man and said: "My dear, you are definitely a Brahmin. So much faith in truth is the very symptom of a Brahmin. You will definitely be able to find the Brahma because to him who has the courage to be true to himself, truth itself will come searching at his doors".

8.
I call the wheel of life, going round on the axle of ambition, as hell. It is the fever of ambition that poisons life. Among the biggest of diseases and mental troubles that man is aware of, there is no disease bigger than ambition; because the mind which is disturbed with the winds of ambition is not destined to have place, music and bliss. He is not in himself; and peace, music and bliss are the results of being in himself. One who is not within the self is diseased. Being within the self alone is healthy.

A young lady asked what is the root of this ambition?

I said; "inferiority complex. A feeling of poverty".
Truly, inferiority complex and ambition appear to be opposed to each other. But are they really contradictory? No. They are not contradictory. But they are the two ends of the same feeling. What is inferiority complex on the one end is ambition on the other. Inferiority itself becomes ambition in its attempt to become free from the self. That is a well-dressed inferiority. But even after putting on the most valuable clothes it is neither eliminated nor destroyed.

It may be that it goes out of sight of others. But the self constantly keeps seeing it. While covered in clothes a person does not remain naked for others, but for himself his nakedness continues as before. This is the reason that those whose ambitious successes dazzle the eyes of others, will remain worried within themselves and keep planning for bigger successes. Their inner inferiority complex does not get destroyed by success. Every new success comes to them as a new challenge for further successes. In this way, those successes which they had taken for solutions prove only the harbingers of newer problems; and whenever a life-problem is caught in a wrong way this is the result. The solutions of problems come as bigger problems in themselves.

It is important to remember that covering up a disease is no escape from it. This way diseases do not go: they only get nourished. The mind, troubled with the inferiority complex, gets filled up with ambition in its attempt to cover and forget it. It is also easy to forget oneself in the feeling of ambition. Then whether this ambition is worldly or for salvation makes no difference. Ambition is intoxicating. Its intoxication brings deep self-forgetfulness. But once a person becomes used to intoxication or to a dose of intoxication, he does not get intoxicated. Therefore, mind needs stronger and stronger doses of intoxicants and it needs new ones too. Therefore ambitions keep on increasing, there is no end to them. They have a beginning, but no end. But when a person gets bored with worldly ambitions, or when his death comes near, then the so-called religious ambitions start. They are also illusory. Their

intoxication is deeper; because their attainment is not apparent; he fear of their getting broken is also less.
As long as a person tries to keep separate from the reality of self, he in some form or the other, suffers from the fever of ambition In his ambition to be different from the self, he tries to cover and forget it. But is it the same thing to have a fact covered and to become free from it? Is the forgetfulness and giving up of a fact the same? No. Forgetting the inferiority complex and getting free from it are not the same. This is a very unwise reaction. Therefore, as you proceed with the treatment the disease keeps on growing. Every success of an ambitious mind is self-killing; because to the fire of ambition it serves as fuel. Success is achieved, but the inferiority does not diminish. Therefore, bigger successes become essential and unavoidable. Basically, this tantamounts to an increase in inferiority complex.

The entire history of mankind is full of such diseased minds. What else are Tamberlaine, Alexander and Hitler? But kindly do not laugh on these views; because it is not civil to laugh at the sick. It is undesirable to laugh for another reason; because the germs of their sickness are present in us all. We are also inheritors from them. Not only individuals, the entire humanity is sick with ambition and, therefore, that big disease escapes our attention. In my opinion, an unavoidable symptom of mental health is an ambition-free life. Ambition is a disease and, therefore, it is destructive. Diseases are always fellow-travellers of death. Ambition is destruction. It is violence. It is hatred coming from a diseased mind; it is jealousy. It is a chronic struggle

between man and man. It is war. Even the ambition for salvation is destructive. That is violence against self. It becomes enmity with the self itself. Worldly ambition is violence against others; ambition for salvation is violence against the self. Where there is ambition there is violence. It is another matter whether it is outward or inward. Violence in every state and form is always destructive. Therefore, only those realizations can be creative which are free from healthy and calm minds. A healthy mind is centred in the self, and the race for being something different is not there. In the smoke of being something different the individual is not able to know what he is; and not to know the self is that basic and central weakness from which all inferiority complexes are born.
There is no other salvation from this weakness except the knowledge of the self. Not ambitions but the knowledge of the self alone frees from this want; and for that it is absolutely necessary to eliminate ambitions from the mind.

I am reminded of an anecdote between Tamberlaine and Baizad. King Baizad got defeated in a battle and was brought before the conqueror Tamberlaine. On seeing him Tamberlaine suddenly started laughing loudly. Thereupon the insulted Baizad lifted his head proudly and said: "Tamberlaine, do not be so proud of your victory in the battle. Remember, he who laughs at the defeat of others has one day to shed tears on his own defeat."
King Baizad was one-eyed and Tamberlaine had only one leg. On hearing the words of one eyed Baizad, lame Tamberlaine laughed twice as much and said: "I am not so foolish as to laugh on this small victory. I am laughing at

our condition, yours and mine! See, you are one-eyed and I am lame! I was laughing at the thought as to why God grants kingdoms to you and me who are one-eyed and lame!"

I want to tell Tamberlaine who is asleep in his grave: This is not the fault of God. In fact, except the lame and the one-eyed, none else is eager for the kingdoms."

And is it not true? Is it not true that the day when man's mind is healthy there will be no kingdoms? Is it not true that those who become healthy have always lost their kingdoms?

Man wants to run away whenever he finds any inferiority in himself. He starts running in the direction exactly opposite to it; and here comes the mistake, because inferiority is no more than an indication of inner poverty. In the depth, every person suffers from inner poverty. One emptiness is felt by all. Attempts are made to fill up this inner emptiness by outer gains, but how can it be possible to fill up the pit of inner emptiness from the outside? That which is exterior is unable for the same reason to fill up the interior. After all, everything is outside: wealth, status, qualities, power, religion, goodness, renunciation, knowledge, God, salvation. Then what is inside? Except that poverty, that emptiness, that nothingness, there is nothing inside. Therefore, to run away from that nothingness is to run away from the self. Running away from them is running away from the existence of self. The way lies not running from it, but in living with it. For that person who takes up courage to live and be awake, that emptiness is filled up. For him that emptiness itself proves to be the great

salvation. In that nothingness exists everything. In that emptiness is existence. That existence itself is God.

9.
I am extremely surprised to see you all worried about life. Life is not known by thinking alone; it can be understood only by living it in full. There is no other way to know the truth. Wake up and live. Wake up and move. Truth is not something dead so that it could be found out without effort. That is an extremely live current. He alone can find it who moves with it freely and without bondage. In long term thinking we often lose what is at hand, while what is at hand is the truth and what is at a distance is hidden in it. Is it not unavoidable to discover what is at hand in order to find out what is at a distance? Does not the entire future exist in the present movement? Does not the smallest step contain in itself the biggest journey ahead?

A simple farmer was going to the hills for the first time in his life. Although those hills were not very far away from his village, even then he had never been able to go up to them. The summits of those hills, covered with greenery, could be seen from his fields, and very often the desire to see them from a close quarter would become very strong in him. But for one reason or the other, the visit had been postponed and he had not been able to go there. Last time, he was detained for the simple reason that he had no lamp with him, and it was necessary to go out in the night itself to reach the hills. The difficult climb of the hills was all the more difficult after the sunrise. But now he had brought a lamp also. and in his excitement of going to the hills he had

no sleep at night. He got up at two O'clock in the night and started for the hills. But immediately after coming out of the village he hesitated and stopped. He developed a worry and a suspicion in his mind. Immediately on coming out of the village he saw that it was the new-moon night and it was stark darkness all round. No doubt he had a lamp with him, but the light of that lamp would not show beyond ten steps and the climb was about ten miles long. He thought that he had to go ten miles while the light, that he carried, could show only up to ten steps. How could it suffice? And was it advisable to proceed in that stark darkness with the light of that small candle? This would be like embarking on a sea in a very small boat. He kept sitting outside the village to await the sunrise. But about the same time he saw another old man passing by him towards the hills. He carried even a smaller lamp in his hand. When he stopped the old man and narrated his doubt to him the old man started laughing loudly and said: "Mad man, you move for ten pace to begin with. Move as much distance as you can see. Then you will start seeing the same much again. If you can see up to one step, you can go round the entire world with its help. That young man understood, got up and moved; and before the sun was out he was on the hills. The advice of that old man is worth remembering even on the path of life.

I also want to say the same thing to you.

Friends, why do you sit tight? Get up and move. Not he who thinks but he who moves, can reach; and may it be remembered that so much discretion, so much light, is possessed by every one as could show the distance for ten

steps ahead. And that is enough. That is enough to reach God.

10.
Love is power; and he alone who lives by love lives in fact. Where there is love there is God, because love is the light produced by God's presence.
It may be remembered that whenever your mind is full of hatred, you become powerless and your relations with God become weak.
It is for this reason that out of anger, hatred and jealousy are born unhappiness and remorse. The state of remorse is born when one's own roots are separated from the existence of the whole.
Love fills you with that happiness, bliss with that music and pity with that fragrance which does not belong to this earth.
Why?
Because by going through them, you become so close to the universal soul, because through them you find a place in the heart of God, because through them you do not remain your self but God himself starts manifesting through you.
Therefore I say that in life he who can find the unbreakable and unending love, finds everything.

I am reminded of an instance. Mohammed with his disciple Ali was passing on some route. An enemy of Ali came and stopped him and he started insulting him. Ali patiently listened to his abuses. His eyes showed love and prayer. He kept on listening to the poisoned talk of his enemy as if the

latter was praising him. His patience was superb. But at last he also lost it, and he came down to the level of the enemy and started giving him tit for tat. Slowly his eyes were full of anger and the clouds of hatred and revenge started thundering in his heart. His hand had already reached the sword. Mohammed was uptil then sitting calm and watching all this. Suddenly he got up and moved off in some Another direction leaving Ali and his enemy on that spot. At this, Ali was very much surprised and also felt a little aggrieved against Mohammed. Later on, when Mohammed met, he asked him: "What was this behaviour of yours? The enemy confronted me, and leaving me in the lurch you came away! Was it not like leaving me in the jaws of death?" Mohammed. said: "Dear one, that man was undoubtedly very violent and cruel and his words were also full of high anger. But I was very happy I saw you in peace and love. At that time, I saw that ten bodyguards sent by God were defending you and his good wishes were raining on you. You were safe on account of love and forgiveness; but as soon as your heart, giving up pity, became hard and your eyes started producing the flames of revenge, I saw that those heavenly bodyguards had left you. At that time it was only right that I should also leave you. God himself had left your company.

11.

I ask every one what he is thinking about life. The meaning and value of life is hidden in the investigation of life itself. If he is searching only for pearls and stones, then how can the value of his life be more than what he is searching for?

But most of the people become small in the investigation of the small, and in the end find that they have wasted the wealth of life in search of such wealth as, in fact, is no wealth at all.
It is desirable that before we start on a journey we find out where we want to reach, why we want so and also whether we will be able to tolerate the difficulties and hard labour that will be involved in the journey to the object.
He who does not think before starting, often finds that either he does not reach anywhere at all or if he reaches somewhere then he does not find that place worth reaching at all.
I want that such a mistake does not happen in your life because it destroys the whole life itself.
Life is short. Power is limited. Time is little. Therefore, only those who move after careful thinking, and with care and caution, can reach somewhere.

There was a beggar. His name was Shivli. He was on a journey. On the way, he saw a young man running fast and asked him: "Friend, where are you running away?" That young man said without stopping: "To my home".
Thereafter Shivli put him a rather strange question. He asked: "Which home?"
I also ask you the same question. You are running away. All are running away. I ask: "Where are you running away?"
Could this entire race not be planned?
Is it not that you are running because all others are running? Without knowing where you have to reach?

I wish in reply to this question you could say the same thing which that young man had told Shivli; and then my whole being will start dancing with happiness.
That young man had said: "There is only one home. The house of God. I am in search of the same".
Doubtless, the rest is all dream. The search for any other home is a dream. Home is only one; real home is only one, the house of God and he who searches for it has to go into himself because he is hidden in the self.
Is there any other house than the house of God?
And can God be found anywhere except in the self.
If I were in place of Shivli. I would have asked that running young man one more question. I do not know what answer he would have given. But let me tell you the question itself. I would ask him: "Friend, if you want to find God why are you running away? Where are you running away? How will you find him by running away who exists right here. Is not the desire to find him in the future an illusion; Him, who exists in the present and now? And he who exists inside can only be lost by running away. To find him, is it not desirable that you should stop, stay and search within yourself?"

12.
Do not search for religion; search for yourself. Religion will then automatically come to you.
Does religion exist in scriptures?
No. Religion does not exist in scriptures. Scriptures are dead and religion is a living entity. Now can that be found in the scriptures?
Does religion exist in sects?

No. Religion does not exist even in sects. Sects are based on unions and religion has an absolutely independent identity of its own. For that it is not necessary to go outside; but you have to move inside.
Religion exists in every breath of the self. All that we lack is the sight to uncover and see it.
Religion exists in every drop of blood of the self. We lack the courage and determination to search it out.
Religion is here like the sun; but you have to open your eyes.
Religion is life; but you have to rise above the graveyard of the body.
Religion is not lifeless. Therefore, do not sleep. Wake up and move. He who sleeps loses it. He who moves on reaches it. He who is awake finds it.
A king was in search of the highest religion of the world. He had grown from youth to old age. But his research had not been completed. How could it have been completed? Life is short and such research is foolish. Even if life were endless the highest religion could not be searched; because in fact religion is religion and that is one. For this reason, what could be high and low, what could be worst and best, about it? Because religions are not many, the search for the highest could not be successful. Where there are not many, there is only one, there is no scope for comparison or weighment. Nor is there any method for doing so. That king was searching for the highest religion but living in the lowest irreligion. When he could not find the true religion, the question of taking life in its direction did not arise. Could anyone ever move in darkness and in the unknown? Nobody asks this question about the opposite of religion;

but about religion there will hardly be anybody who does not ask it. Nobody ever thinks or makes a search about irreligion. That has to be lived while religion has to be searched. Probably this so-called search is a way to live in the opposite of religion and avoid living in religion itself. Nobody ever told the king about it. The learned, the saints and the philosophers of different religions used to come to him. They quarrelled with one another. They used to show one another's faults. They used to prove that the others were in ignorance. The king used to be pleased with it. In this way, religion itself was an illusion and ignorance in his eyes and he could find support for living in the opposite of it. It was difficult to win over that king on the side of religion. Because whoever took sides were themselves not in favour of religion. Groups, sects and religious institutions are always on their own sides. They have nothing to do with religion. They could not have. Only he who gives up all sides can belong to religion. Without giving up sides it is difficult to belong to religion. Religious sects are ultimately enemies of religion and friends of its opposite.

But the king did not stop his research. It had become a play for him; and even the Opposite of religion began to bring to him pain, cares and misery. As death started approaching and the harvest time of life came near, he became restless. But he was not prepared to accept anything except the highest, internally faultless and the complete religion. He was adamant; and until perfect religion was clear to him he was determined not to move even one step of life towards it. Years after years went by, and on his own he was getting

himself deeper in the mud. At last, his death came close at doors.

One day a young beggar came to his door and asked for alms, and finding the king extremely worried, depressed and perturbed, asked him the reason. The king told him: "What could you do even after knowing it? The big, big scholars, saints and mendicants have not been able to help me". That beggar said: "It is possible that their bigness itself was a handicap for them, and then the scholars have never been able to do anything. Are the saints and mendicant, who are identified only by their clothes, really the saints and mendicants who matter?" The king looked at that beggar with attention. The king had in his eyes something which was not in the eyes of the beggar. That something can be seen only in the eyes of the king. In the meantime, that beggar spoke again: "I can do nothing. In fact, I do not exist. But he who exists can do a lot". What he said was really wonderful. He was entirely different from the thousands who came to convince the king. The king started thinking who this man was in this poor dress, but outwardly he said: "I want to search out the highest religion and make life religious; but this has not been possible and, therefore, I am very unhappy now towards the end of my life.

Which religion is the highest?" That beggar started laughing loudly and said: "Oh king! You wanted to put the cart before the horse, and therefore you are unhappy. Life does not become religious after searching out religion; is found out only after life becomes religious religion. And what madness was it that you wanted to search out the highest religion? Even the search of religion itself was

enough. It is only religion that exists. Highest religion? I have never heard of it. These words are meaningless. Nothing remains to be added to qualify religion. There is only a circle. There is nothing like a full circle; because what is not a full circle is not a circle at all. Its being a circle implies its fullness. The very existence of religion implies the truth of its being impartial and faultless. And those who come to you to prove the highest religion are either not less mad than you are or they are hypocrites. He who knows knows only religion and not the religions.
The king was deeply moved and touched the beggar's feet. The beggar said: "Kindly leave my feet. Do not bind them. I have come here to free your feet also. Please come to the other side of the river outside your kingdom. There itself I can point my finger to the religion." Both of them went to the river-bank. The best boats of the capital were called out but that beggar would show one fault or the other in each one of them. At last the king became worried. He said to the beggar: 'Oh, great soul! we have to cross only a small river. This can be crossed even by swimming. Let us forget these boats. Let us go and swim it over. Why should we waste our time?"
As if the beggar was waiting for it, he said to the king: "Oh king! I also want to say the same thing. Why are you worried about the boats of religious sects? Is it not desirable that we should swim over ourselves to God? In fact, there is no boat of religion. Boats are named only for the profession of the boatmen. The only way is self-swimming. Truth can be found out only by self-effort. Nobody else can give it. One has to swim in the sea of truth by himself. There is no other support. Those who look out

for support get drowned near the coast itself, and those who take up courage to swim for themselves cross it over even after a little drowning.

13.
A child asked me: "I want to become like the Buddha. Can you show me the way to reach my ideal?"
That boy was very aged. He had seen at least sixty springs. But he who wants to become like others is still a child and has not yet become mature.
Is it not the sign of maturity of a man that, instead of being like others, he should wish to be like himself? And if somebody wants to become like another, will he ever become so?
A person can only become like himself. It is impossible to be like others.
If I call that old man a 'boy, you might laugh. But if you probe into it, you will not laugh but weep, because you will find that childish mentality exists even in yourself. Do not you yourself want to be like some one else? Do you have the courage and maturity in you to be like your own self? If everybody is mature, then the question of following some one does not arise. Is it not because of the childlike mentality that the following and the followers, the disciple and the teacher, come into existence? And remember that the intellect that wants to follow is not only immature, but also blind.
What did I tell that old boy?
I told him: "Friend, he who wants to become like someone else loses himself. Every seed contains in itself its own tree and so also each individual. There is no other way to be

anything except one's own self. In an attempt to be something else, it is possible that the individual may not become what he could have been. Search out what you are; and the way to develop lies in what you can be. Other than that there is no ideal for anybody. In the name of ideals persons get deflected from the path of self-development; they reach nowhere. I see suicides behind the cover of ideals and there could be nothing but suicides. What shall I do whenever I will try to be like some one else? I will kill my own self; I will suppress myself: I will hate myself. Thus there will be suicide and hypocrisy; because it will be an acting to show what I am not, to look and to demonstrate what I am not. As soon as duality develops in individuality, hypocrisy sets in. Wherever there is self-contradiction in personality there is falsehood, there is irreligion; and it is only natural that such an unnatural attempt should bring pain, worry and repentance. The excess of such tensions becomes a hell for men. Except the ideal, born out of the self-born truth, self-born possibilities, and the discipline which automatically follows like its shadow, everything else makes a man ugly and deformed. Frames or ideals and discipline, imported from outside, bring about suicide. Therefore, I say: "Search for yourself and find yourself. It is the door of God, only those are welcome who find themselves. Through that door the real 'Ram' may pass but the 'Ram of Ram-Lila cannot. Whenever some one, inspired by the external ideals, wants to mould himself, he behaves like the 'Ram' of Ram-Lila. It is different that some may succeed more, some less. But in the end the more successful he is the farther away he is from the self. The success of the 'Rams' Or Ram-Lila is, in fact a, failure of

the self. Ram, Buddha or Mahavir cannot be taken up as covers and whoever puts them on, has neither music, nor independence, nor beauty, nor truth in him individuality. God will give him the same treatment as a king of Smarta gave to a man who had become so adept in imitating the voice of a bulbul that he had forgotten the voice of man. That person was very famous and people from far and wide came to listen to him. He wanted to demonstrate his skill even before he king. After great difficulty he could get the permission to appear before him. He had thought that the king would give him praise and honour him with reward. This expectation of his was not unjustified after the praise and rewards he had been getting from others. But what did the king tell him? The king said: "Gentleman, I have heard the bulbul itself singing, and I expect you to sing not the songs of bulbul but the songs for which you have been born. For songs of the bulbul, bulbuls are enough. You go and prepare your own song and when vou have prepared it come to me. I will be ready to welcome you and rewards will also be ready for you." Surely, life is not to imitate others, but to develop the tree which is hidden in the seed of the self. Life is not imitation; it is an original creation.

14.

A temple is under construction. I pass by it and think: "The temples are many; perhaps the number of persons visiting them has gone down; but then why is this new temple being constructed? And this is not alone. There are many other temples under construction. Few temples are built everyday. Temples are constructed and the number of persons visiting them is going down. What is the mystery

behind it? I thought a lot, but could not get at the reason. Then I asked an old mason who was constructing that temple. I thought he might know the mystery behind the construction of many new temples because he had constructed many of them. That old man started laughing at my question and then he took me behind the temple where the stones were being chizzled. There the idols of God were also being made. I thought: Perhaps he would say that the temple was being constructed for those statues of God. But this would not satisfy my curiosity. Because then the question will be why these statues were being made. But no; I saw mistaken. He did not say anything about the statues. He left them behind and moved on. In the end, and after everything else, some artists were working on a stone. That old man showed me that stone and said: "It is for this that the temple is being constructed and temples have always been constructed for this". I was stunned and started repenting over my foolishness. Why could not think of it earlier. On that stone, they were engraving the name of the person who was getting the temple constructed.

Thinking about it I was returning homewards when I saw a procession on the way. Someone had renounced the world and taken to sannyas. The procession was in his honour. I also stood by the roadside and started seeing it. I looked at the face and the eyes of the person who had renounced. The emptiness common in the eyes of a Sannyasi was not there in his eyes. In them existed the same pride and same greatness which can be seen in the eyes of politicians; But could it be possible that I was mistaken and only the effect of the conversation with that old mason was working? But I

know many other Sannyasis also. The subtle form of pride that you can see in them is difficult to find elsewhere. Perhaps any action produced by the mind of man is not above that pride. Unless you can get free from the mind, there is no salvation from the sense of greatness. Only a few days ago, a friend kept fasts for ten days. I was very much surprised to see his anxiety to advertise those fasts. But no, that was my mistake. That old mason had uncovered all the mistakes of my whole life. After the fast, that friend received lot of welcome and honour. I was also present there. There a gentleman whispered into my ears: "Poor fellow has borne the entire expenditure of this reception. I was startled that day; but because of that old man, I am wiser today and see no reason for surprise. On the contrary, one thought haunts me again and again. If advertisement is so useful in the world why will it not be in heaven? Will not the rule of heaven be the same as those of the world? After all, the heaven is also a creation of the same mind that creates the world. Is not the desire and conception of heaven the same as desire of the mind? Then what is this God? Is He not an invention of man's mind? He also feels insulted and angry, and out of revenge roasts his enemies in the fire of hell. He also feels happy through praise, saves his devotees from troubles and showers blessings on them. What is all this that he saves devotees from troubles and showers blessings on them? Is it not the reflection of man's mind? Then why will not advertising succeed in his world also? He should also be counting fame as a proof? After all, what else could be the yard-stick of man with him? I was telling the same thing to a sannyasi. And he became very angry: "What is all this you keep on

thinking? No. Where is the need for advertisement in religion. All this is a game of ego. All This is a product of it. In ignorance, the self falls into pride". When he said so I accepted it. Renunciation leads to knowledge. and because he ha I renounced his all, he must have found knowledge. How could it be possible to doubt his words? But in a short time he reminded me two-three times that he had renounced property worth lakhs of rupees and become a sannyasi. In other words, he was not an ordinary sannyasi. The Yard-stick of renunciation is also money. I asked him: "When did you renounce all this? He said: "About 25 to 30 years ago". At that time the shine in his eyes was worth seeing. They say that renunciation brings a shine in the eye t May be it is said for this type of shine. I felt afraid and said to him: "Sir, perhaps your kick was not strong enough; otherwise, could the memory of that day be so green even after a lapse of 30 years?" What I feared ultimately did happen. HiS anger burst forth. But I consoled myself in the thought that this was an old habit of the sages. Was it not enough of compassion that he did not pour some sort of curse on me? At the time of my departure, I told him a story. I will repeat it to you. Think over it carefully. It is full of meaning.

A rich man offered ten thousand gold coins to Shri Nathji. But he started counting each gold coin before placing it in front of the idol. He would take them out of the bag with force and there would be a lot of tinkle. A crowd collected in the temple on hearing that tinkle. He started producing still more sound in counting the coins. As the crowd increased, his pleasure of renunciation increased. At last

when he finished counting the coins and, with pride in his eyes, looked at the people assembled there, the priest told him: "Brother, take these coins away. Sri Nathji will not accept such offering". The rich man was surprised. He asked: "Why Sir?" The priest said: "Can love be demonstrated? Is prayer a thing to be demonstrated? But in your heart there is the desire for advertisement. Such a desire is incapable to offer, such a desire is incompetent to renounce; such a desire is unqualified to love.

15.

"I want to forget myself in the Brahma. Pride is pain. I want to offer this pride to God. What shall I do?" a devotee asked me with great mental agitation. I know him. For years he has been sitting in the temple of God. With his head on the feet of God he keeps weeping for hours. His desire is very keen. But his direction is wrong. Because a person who accepts the 'I', becomes the 'I' on account of that acceptance itself. Out of this 'I', follows pain and then he wants to get rid of it and wants to offer himself to the care of God. But the central core of this offer is also the '1', because who is it that wants to offer? Who is it who wants to get rid of pain and trouble? Is it not the 'I' itself? Whose is this anxiety and urge for God for the supreme happiness and for salvation? Who is he that makes you run in the world and then also excites you for salvation? Is it not the 'I' itself? I ask: Is it possible that 'I' should give up myself. I want to offer away myself. Will not "mine" be involved in giving up myself? Is not my offer also 'mine'? Whatever is 'mine', gives birth to 'mine' or 'I'? Do not my wealth, my possession, my wife, my children produce this 'I'? My

sannyasa, my renunciation, my offering, my service, my religion, my soul, my salvation also produce the 'I'. So long as any bit of the mine remains, so long 'I' is also perfectly intact.

Every action of the 'I', sin or piety, enjoyment or renunciation, strengthens the 'I'. By application or by offering, that alone is collected and strengthened.

Is there no way to give up the 'I'? Is there no method of renouncing it? There is no way or method of giving up, renouncing or offering the 'I', because whatever can be done ultimately proves to be life-giving for the 'I'. By action, by deeds or by resolve no one has ever gone out of the 'I' or can go out of it: because the resolve itself is 'I' in a small form. Resolve is the unripe form of 'I'. After ripening, it is transformed into 'I'. 'I' is the consolidated state of a resolve. Therefore, how could 'I' be given up with the help of resolve? And what are our attempts? Our offerings? Are they not all extensions of resolve?

Attempts at freedom from the 'I' by the 'I' itself are as foolish as trying to lift oneself up by catching hold of the laces of one's shoes. In fact, the 'I' cannot be given up; because if that exists, whatever else is there does not exist, could not exist; and if that does not exist, it does not; and then the question of its non-existence does not arise.

Therefore, it is proper that the 'I' should be known. I say: not by surrender but by knowledge; not by meditation but by knowledge; not by renunciation but by knowledge; and the wonder of wonders is that when through application or surrender it gets nourished, by knowledge it cannot be found at all!

To know the 'I' in its perfection is to become free from it.

'I' cannot be given up because in reality it does not exist; and falsehoods have to be invented in vain to surrender what is not there.
'I' is an untruth. With a view to giving it up, another untruth of 'surrender' has to be invented and then to support the untruth of 'surrender' another untruth of 'God' has to be created in imagination; but from such untruths there is no salvation. On the other hand, bigger untruths are released.
There was a beggar. He found an orphan boy by the road side. That beggar brought him up and brought him to age. There was a graveyard just behind the beggar's hut; and that child was very naughty. Therefore, he would move away to graveyard by day or by night. To ensure that he did not go to the graveyard, the beggar told him. "Do not go there in the darkness. Ghosts reside there and they eat up men." Naturally, from that day onwards the child started fearing the graveyard and avoiding it. Then he went to the Gurukul. There also he felt afraid of loneliness and darkness. After several years he returned home. Now he was young man. But simultaneously his fear had also grown young. One night, the beggar asked him to cross the grave yard and go to the village for some job. But that young man started trembling at the very thought of crossing the graveyard at night and said: "How can I go there in darkness? That place is haunted by ghosts who eat up men?" The beggar laughed; he tied a talisman around his arm and said: "Go. Now the ghosts will not be able to harm you; because of this talisman God will always protect you and be with you; because of God the ghosts will not now be able to appear before you. With God near you, how could you fear the ghosts? So that young man went, and not

finding the ghosts there, the power of God was easily proved to him. That way the ghosts disappeared but God came in, and God, which had been brought in to drive away the ghosts, could naturally be a bigger ghost only. That young man, with the help of God, could now get clear of the ghosts but he could not separate the talisman from himself even for a moment; It was inevitable for him to feel afraid of God which could terrify even the ghosts: He was afraid lest God should give up company for some of his faults, sin, or crime. Otherwise, thereafter the ghosts would take their full revenge on him. For this reason, he started the worship and prayer of God. Not only did he start worshipping but simultaneously he had to fear also his representatives and brokers on the earth. On seeing all this, the beggar was upset. His remedy had proved to be a bigger malady. Poor ghosts were far better than this God. They used to tease in the graveyard alone in the darkness of the night; but this God was after him even in the light of the day. On one night of the new moon the beggar snatched way the talisman from the young man's arm and threw It away in the oven in front. The young man started trembling and his face grew pale. He would have fainted; but the beggar supported him and then narrated the whole story about the birth of ghosts and the invention of God to him. When he felt slightly convinced, the beggar took him to the graveyard. They searched every corner of the graveyard. The young man was surprised because there was no ghost anywhere there. That way disappeared the ghosts and also God. That young man felt relieved and free from fear. In fact a thorough search of ghosts and their abodes only leads to freedom from them.

'I produces pain, brings torture, gives birth to worries and produces unsafety and fear of death. Therefore, to find an escape from it, the idea of 'surrender' to God is invented. It is out of its fear that God and its devotion get born; while 'I' does not exist at all. So long as we do not search for it and know it, it exists. It has no existence except in ignorance; and how can that be offered which does not exist? If the ghosts do not exist what is there to escape from? Because the ghosts exist, God is needed. Because 'I' exists, surrender to God is necessary. Find out the ghosts of 'I'; and not the talisman for protection against it.
Dive inside yourself and find out where this 'I' exists. As soon as you start searching you will find that it does not exist. The graveyard is empty of ghosts. The existence of the self is empty of 'I', and then what is left over is God; what is experienced is surrender; and then what exists is Brahma.

16.
An old woman was very sick. As she was alone in the house she was in great difficulty. One day early in the morning two nice ladies, looking very religious, came to her. They had sandal marks on their hands and also a rosary of beads. They started serving the old woman and said: By God's grace everything will be all right. Faith is power; and it never goes waste. That simple old lady trusted them. More so because she was alone, and a lone person wants to trust people. She was in pain, and while in trouble man's mind trusts easily. These unknown ladies served her for the whole day. Because of the service and the religious talks of the day, the old lady's confidence became still stronger. At

night, according to instructions of those ladies, she lay herself down with a cover so that a prayer to God for her health could be performed. Incense was burnt; good smelling water was sprinkled; and one of the ladies, with her hand on her head, started reciting some unknown mantras. Then with the sweet music of the mantras, the old lady was put to sleep. At mid-night she woke up. There was darkness in the house. When she lighted the lamp, she found that those unknown ladies had left long ago. The doors of the house were open; and her safe had been broken. Surely, her confidence did bear fruits! Not for the old lady, but for the crooked ones. And there is nothing surprising in it because faith has always been fruitful for the crooks.

Religion is nOt faith; it is discretion .It is not blindness; it is a treatment of the 'I.'

But for exploitation, discretion is an obstacle; and, therefore the poison of faith is administered.

Thinking is revolt; and because exploitation of a revolutionary is impossible, education of 'faith' is given.

Thinking makes a man free; makes him a man. But for exploitation you want sheep. You require weak minded followers. Therefore, thinking is murdered and faith is nurtured.

Man is helpless; and therefore, in his helplessness, in his loneliness, he accepts faith.

Life is pain; and, therefore, to run away from it, one goes in the lap of any faith or belief.

This state definitely offers a Golden opportunity for the exploiters and for the selfish.

Religion is in the hands of crooks; and, therefore, there is irreligion in the world. So long as religion is not free from faith, the real religion cannot be born.
Only when religion will be combined with the fire of discretion then alone freedom, truth and power will be born. Religion is power; because thinking is power.
Religion is light. Religion is light, because intellect is light.
Religion is freedom, because discretion is freedom.

17.
Religion, religion, religion. How much is religion talked about, but what is the result?
Whomsoever I hear, he quotes from the scriptures, But what is the result?
Man is constantly getting drowned in pain and misery; and here we are repeating our crammed principles.
Life is getting inclined every moment to animalism; and here we are, bowing our heads as ever in the temples of stones.
In words, in lifeless words we are so much involved that we have perhaps lost the power to see the truth.
Our mind is so much bound to scriptures that we have lost the power to investigate for ourselves.
And perhaps, for the same reason, there is an unbridgeable gulf between thought and action.
And perhaps for the same reason, we keep on living exactly against what we profess to wish; and the wonder is that this contradiction is not even seen by us!
Have we not become blind even with our eyes in tact?

I ponder over this state of life and find that those very truths which have not been discovered personally, are dragging us into such confusion.
Truth, if discovered by self, leads to freedom; and if it does not come from the self, it ties up into still tighter bonds. There is no bigger untruth than the truths which are taught; and such borrowed truths produce very troublesome contradictions in life.
There was a domestic parrot in a hilly inn. The parrot used to repeat, day and night, what his master had taught him. He used to say: "Freedom, freedom, freedom." A traveller came to that inn for the first time. The words of that parrot touched him to the core. In the fight for freedom for his country he had been arrested several times; and when that parrot said: "Freedom, freedom, freedom," after breaking the stark silence of that hill, the echo would resound in his heart. He would remember the days of his imprisonment and would remember that his own inner being used to cry the same way: "Freedom, freedom, freedom." When the night fell, that traveller got up and tried to free that parrot who was desirous of freedom. The traveller was dragging the parrot out of its cage but it was not ready to come out. On the other hand, he held fast to the bars of the cage and shouted still more loudly: "Freedom, freedom, freedom." With great difficulty, the traveller was able to bring the parrot out. After setting him free in the sky, he fell fast asleep. But when he got up in the morning, he saw that the parrot was sitting happily inside the cage and was crying; "Freedom, freedom, freedom."

I have heard an incident. Those were war days, and bombardment started suddenly. On a lonely path a priest was going somewhere. Running quickly, he took shelter in a cave in which foxes lived. As soon as he reached inside, he saw that a military officer had already been hiding there. That officer slipped into a corner so that there could be room for the new comer. Then the bombs started falling in the vicinity. The priest started trembling. He sat akimbo, and started praying to God. He was praying loudly. When he lifted his eyes, he found that military officer was also praying as loudly as he. hen the attack ended, that priest asked the military officer; "Brother, I saw that you were also praying?" That military officer started laughing and said: "Sir, where could there be an atheist in the cave of foxes?"

"Are you also not searching for God because of fear? Are your prayers also not based on fear?"

Remember that the religion based on fear is not true religion.

I prefer a fearless atheist to a theist who is afraid; because it is impossible to reach God through fear.

The first condition to find the truth is fearlessness.

And think over; can fear ever become love? If fear cannot become love, how can it become prayer?

Prayer is perfection of love.

But in the foundations of temples, made by men, there is the brick of fear; and the God carved out of fear is made with feelings of fear. It is for this reason that all that we possess is untrue; because what could be true with those whose God himself was not true?

And where is the wonder if the very breath of those be false whose thoughts are untrue, whose love is untrue, whose prayer is untrue?
Through love; prayer is true only through love.
And through knowledge and only through knowledge can He be known who exists.
I say: love, and the intensity of love alone converts life into prayer. I say: awaken your own intellect, because the awakening of that alone leads to a view of God.
Love and intellect -- he who has understood these two basic mantras can know all that should be known, that is worth knowing, and can be known.
Where is the temple of God? When some one asks me, I tell him: "That is in love; in intellect."
Surely, love is God. Intellect is God.

19.
One day there was a big crowd at the gate of Heaven. Some priests were crying; "Open the door quickly" But the gate-keepers told them; "Wait a little. Let us find out about you whether the knowledge which you have has been collected from the scriptures or from the self, because there is no value here for the knowledge collected from the scriptures".
In the meantime, a saint came in front of the crowd and said: "Open the door. I want to enter the Heaven. I have undergone many fasts and penances. During my times, who was a bigger penance-performer than I?"
The gate-keeper said: "Svamiji, please wait a little. Let us find out why you performed the penance, because where there is the slightest desire for gaining something there is neither renunciation nor penance."

And just at that time came a few social workers. They also wanted to enter the Heaven.
The gate-keeper told them: "You have also fallen into a big mistake. Service that claims reward is no service at all. Even so, we will find out about you."
And then the eyes of the gate-keepers fell on a person who was standing behind all in darkness. They asked the crowd to make way for that person. Tears were falling from that man's eyes. He said "Undoubtedly, I have been brought here by mistake. Where am I; and where the Heaven? I am an absolute fool. I clo not know the scriptures at all. I am absolutely unaware of renunciation, because how could I renounce anything when I had nothing with me? I have never done any service. Where did I have the power to do that? It is only love that flows from my heart. But love is no qualification for entry into the Heaven. And above all, I also do not want to enter Heaven. Kindly be good and tell me the way to hell. Perhaps. there is my place and there I am needed!"
"Soon after his speech. the gate-keepers opened the gates of Heaven and said: "You are blessed among the mortals. You have gained immortality. The gates of Heaven are always open for you. You are welcome."
Is it not a prayer of God to be the lowest in the queue of life?
Is it not salvation to be the lowest in life?

20.
It is an incident of the full-moon night. It was mid-night and surrounded by friends, I was in a boat on a lake. All round me were the rocks, bathed in moon-light. It was all

so beautiful that it could not be believed. It seemed as if I was in a city of dreams. He stepped rowing the boat and stood still in the middle of the lake. But my friends were not there. They had brought me with them; but I do not know whether they were left behind or gone ahead. Even though surrounded by them, I was alone on the lake, because all of them were lost in many things, which I do not know. The talks related either to the past, which was not there or to the future, which was also not there. But their consciousness was not there with them. They were not present for that wonderful lake and for that night of dreams, as if the present did not exist for them. Then suddenly one of them asked: "Does God exist? " What answer could I give them? I was thinking about it, because how could they who had no relation with the liveliness of the present have any relation with God. Life itself is God. The realization of life is the realization of God. Even then I told them: "Friends, is it a lake? Is it the moon? Is it the night? And are we all present on this lake in this wonderful night of the full-moon? Surely, all of them were startled and said: "Yes. There is the question of doubt about it? But I said: "No; I have no doubt; I am convinced that you are not here. Please think again? He, who is present in the physical sense only, can gather an idea only of the physical existence of the world; but he who is present with all his consciousness, c an realize God here and now? God is there; but only for those who are attentive to Him, for them who exist."

Again, I was reminded of an incident and I told them: "A few persons had collected outside an office. One of them was to be selected for the post of a wireless operator. All

those applicants and candidates were busy discussing useless things. Then slowly some sounds started emanating from the transmitter; but they were all so engrossed and lost in their conversation that those low signals could not attract their attention. But one young man sat away from them, alone in a corner. He got up at once and went inside the office. The rest of them did not see him rising or going inside the office. They observed him only when, with a smile, he came out of the office with an appointment letter in his hand. Naturally, all of them were speechless; and, in anger, they asked that young man: "Gentleman, how did you happen to go inside before everyone else? All of us were here much before you? You were the last in the queue. How could you be appointed unless we were considered? What is this high-handedness? What is this injustice? On this that young man started laughing and said: "friends, how am I to blame for it? Any one of you could be appointed; and perhaps I have been appointed after all of you have been considered. Did you not hear the message given on the transmitter? They all spoke with one voice: "What type of message? What message?" Then the young man told them: "Are you not aware of the signals given by wireless? The sound produced on the transmitter clearly told: "I want a person who is always careful and attentive. The appointment letter has been kept ready for the person who will listen to this message and enter the office before any one else."

God's messages are also raining every day. Nature is the language of his signals. In silence and with attention, he who keeps alive to those signals is definitely invited inside through them.

21.

Is 'Love' not God himself? Is not heart, drowned in love, the very temple? And does not he who, after giving up love, searches for Him elsewhere search in vain?

One day, I used to ask this to myself; today I ask the same of you. He who searches for God announces that he has not attained love, because he who attains love attains God also. The search for God starts from the want of love, whereas it is impossible to find God without love. He who searches for God cannot in any case find Him; in addition, he is deprived of the search of love. But he who searches for love, ultimately finds love and also God in the end.

Love is the path; love is the door; love is the power of feet; love is the thirst of life; and, in the end, love is the achievement. In truth, love is God.

I say: leave God; find love. Forget the temples; search your heart, because if He exists, he is there.

If there is any idol of God, it is Love. But that idol has been lost among the idols of stone. If there is any temple of God, it is the heart; but the temples of mud have fully covered it. God has been lost because of His own idols and temples; and it is difficult to meet Him because of His priests; because of the new praises and prayers sung for Him, it has become impossible to hear His own voice.

If love returns, God will also return with it in the life of man.

A learned man went to meet a saint. He carried on his head such a big bundle of scriptures that by the time he reached the saint's hut he was half-dead. He reached and asked the saint: "What shall I do to meet God?" But the bundle that

he carried on his head was still there. The saint said: "Friend, first of all you take off this bundle." The learned man felt very reluctant Even so, he took courage and put down the load. Undoubtedly, you require indomitable courage to throw the loads off your soul. But even then he was keeping one hand on the bundle. The saint said again: "Friend, pull off that hand also." That man must have been very courageous, because with all his power he withdrew his hand from the bundle. Then the saint said: "Are you acquainted with love? Have your feet ever travelled on the path of love? If not, go and enter the temple of love. Live the love, and know it; and then come back. I can assure you of escorting to God thereafter."

That 'learned' man went back. He came as a learned man but was no longer so. He left his collection of knowledge there, behind him.

That man was surely extraordinary and wonderful; because it is easier to give up thrones but far more difficult to give up knowledge, After all, the knowledge is the last support of ego.

But, for love it is necessary to lose.

The opposite of love is hatred. The main enemy of love is pride, and hatred is one of its progenies. Attachment, non-attachment, desire, freedom from desire, greed, hatred, jealousy,, anger, enmity -- all are its children. The family of pride is very large. The saint went with that person up to the outskirts of the village and bade him goodbye. He deserved it. The saint was happy with his courage Where there is courage, there is possibility of the birth of religion. Courage leads to freedom and freedom brings you face to face with truth.

But then the years rolled off. The saint became old in expectation of his return. But he did not come back. At last, the saint himself started in search of him, and one day he did find him out. Lost in himself he was dancing in a village. It was difficult even to recognize him. Happiness had rejuvenated him. The saint stopped him and asked: "You did not come? I became tired of waiting for you, and then I have myself come here in search of you. Do not you want to search out God?" That man said: "No. Not at all. The moment I discovered love, that very moment I have found him also."

22.

A women asked: "I want to change myself. What shall I do?"

I said: "First thing: Avoid changing the clothes, because whenever the moment of revolution comes in somebody's life then his mind entangles him in changing the clothes. This is convenient for the mind and in this lies its safety. With the change of clothes, mind does not die; on the other hand, in new clothes instead of the old and worn out, it attains a longer life.

With the change of clothes there is no change in the self; on the other hand, there is satisfaction of the self; and self-satisfaction is suicide. "

That woman asked: "Which clothes?"

I said: "There are many types of clothes. There are many types of self-deceptions. You should beware of whatever can be put on as a cover. Whatever covers the reality of the self should be for self-deception. To them alone I am giving the name of 'clothes'. If a man is a sinner, he puts on

the clothes of virtue; if a man is violent, he puts on the clothes of non-violence; if a man is ignorant, he stuffs himself with scriptures and words and covers up himself with their knowledge. It is an old trick of an irreligious mind to put on the cover of religion in order to get away from it. Do not you see all round the same which I am telling you?"

Then she thought a bit and said: "I want to become a nun."

I said: "Finished!" Then you may take it that the change of clothes has started. Whenever a man wants to be something, the conspiracy of the mind starts. The ambition to be something is the 'mind'. This ambition itself wants to divert that which exists; and wants to take the cover of what is not there. Ideals alone are the fathers of all covers and masks. He who wants to know the truth -- and no original revolution is possible without knowing the truth -- will have to know him which actually exists. Revolution becomes fruitful not in the ambition of what does not exist but in the uncovering of what exists. When a person comes to know in full the truth about the self, this knowledge becomes revolution. In the revolution of knowledge there is no gap of time. Where there is gap of time, there is no revolution; there is only search for cover and change."

Then I narrated to her an incident:

One day a person approached Abu Hasan and said: "Oh, saint, beloved of God, I am afraid of my sinful life and am determined to change myself. I want to become a saint. Will you not take pity on me? Can you not give me the pious clothes that you have been using? I also want to become pious after wearing them."

That person put his head on the feet of Hasan and drenched them with tears. There was no question of doubt in his deep desire were not his very tears the witness of it?
Abu Hasan laughed at him and said: "Friend, before I make the mistake of giving my clothes to you, can you also be kind enough to give reply to a question of mine? Can any woman become a man by wearing his clothes?
Or, can any man become a woman by wearing her clothes?"
That man wiped off his tears. Perhaps, he had come to a wrong place. He said: "No". Abu Hasan started laughing and said. Here are my clothes. But how will it matter even if you put on my body? Has any one ever become a saint by putting on the saint's clothes?" And if I were in place of Hasan, I would have said: "Could any one ever become a saint even after getting inspired to become so? Saintliness comes. It is the fruit of knowledge; and wherever there is a desire to be something, there is no knowledge; because a mind moved by desires becomes restless; and where is knowledge in restlessness? Wherever there is a desire to be anything, there is an escape from the self; and how can he know the self who runs away from it? Therefore, I say: "Do not run; awake. Do not change; see. Because he who is awake and sees himself, finds religion coming to his own door."

A rich man gave a party to his friends on a special occasion. The king of that town was also present in that party. Therefore, the rich man's pleasrue knew no bounds. But when the guests had just started with the lunch his happienss turned into anger. His servants were in

attendance. One of his servants dropped a plate, full of hot food, on his foot. His foot was burnt and anger sprang up in his eyes. Surely, there was no possibility of that slave living any more. That slave was trembling in fear. But a drowning man catches at a straw. In self-defence, he quoted a saying from the pious scriptures of that country: "Heaven is for him who can control his anger."

His master heard it. His eyes were full of anger, but even then he controlled himself and said: "I am not in anger".

On hearing the above, naturally, the guests clapped and even the king himself praised him. The anger in the eyes of that rich man turned into pride. He felt very much elated.

But that slave said again: "Heaven is for him who forgives". His master said: "I forgive you".

Although there is forgiveness in those eyes which are full of pride, yet pride could be fed with forgiveness also. Very subtle are the ways of pride! That rich man now appeared very religious to his guests. They had always known him as a very cruel exploiter. Seeing this new face of him, they were all wonder-struck. The king, sitting in front, also looked at him as if he was looking at a person superior to him. That rich man was now no longer on this earth. His head was touching the sky.

At last, that slave completed the unfinished saying of the scriptures: "Because God loves those who are compassionate".

That rich man looked around. Worldly greed was always in his eyes. Today it had become the other-worldly and he told that slave: "Go, I free you. Now you are no longer my slave"; and he also gave him a bag full of gold coins. In his eyes, anger had turned into pride; and the same now turned

into greed. Anger, greed, hatred, fear -- are they not all manifestations of the same power?
And if religion be so cheap, which of the rich men will not like to buy it?
Is not religion also standing on the support of fear and greed? I ask, what then are the supports of irreligion?
Is it not pride even on the top of the religion?
I ask: Then what is the top of the temple of irreligion?

23.
I was sitting in the house of a multi-millionnaire. What was there which was not with him? But his eyes were very poor and one felt moved on seeing them. He used to collect wealth from morning till evening. His life was spent up in counting the coins, taking care of them and keeping them safe; but he was not rich. He was perhaps only a caretaker. Throughout the day he could earn, and would guard at night. I;or the same reason, he could not even sleep. Which watchman of wealth has ever slept? Sleep, dreamless sleep, is the wealth of only those who become free from madness of all types of wealth, of money of fame, of religion; he who is running any kind of race, makes all his days and nights peaceless. Peace-lessness is the shadow of a running mind. Where the mind rests, there is peace.
When at night I took leave of the poor but multi-millionaire host to go to sleep, he said: "I also want to sleep. But there is sleep which does not even look at me. My nights pass in cares. I do not know what type of irrelevant thoughts keep on running. I do not know what types of fears keep frightening me. Kindly tell me some way to healthy and peaceful sleep. What shall I do? I am getting mad."

What way could I tell? I knew the disease. Wealth was his malady. It was that which teased him during the day and the same at the night. Night is only a reaction and fruition of the day. Whatever may be the malady, basically any kind of search for safety outside the self is the root cause. That does not provide safety and only increases the disease. As long as, after giving up all methods of safety, a person does not return to himself till then, his whole life remains a long and painful dream. The real safety does not exist, except in himself. But to find it out, courage to remain unsafe in all respects is essential. I told him a story, and said, "go and sleep", and surprisingly he did sleep. Next day, he had tears of gratitude and happiness in his eyes. Today when I think of it I do not trust it myself. What magic did that story perform on him? Perhaps in some particular state of mind even an ordinary thing becomes extraordinary. Definitely, something of that sort should have happened. Possibly, the arrow unintentionally struck the right spot. That night he did sleep; it is true. Thereafter, even in his life new flowers started blossoming.

What is that story? Naturally enough, the desire to know it has become deep in your eyes.

There was a great city. A saint came to that town. Saints do come and go; but there was something strange in that one. Thousands of people were coming to his hut; and whoever came near it would return with the same fragrance and freshness which is found on digging himself in front of the rocky falls or in the utter silence of the forest or under stars of the sky. The name of that saint was also strange: Koti Karna Shrone. He was very rich before taking up Sannyas and he used to wear rings worth crores of rupees in his ears.

Therefore his name became Koti Karna, lIe did have money with him but when he did not find his inner poverty disappearing, he became rich by renouncing the wealth. He used to say the same thing to others; and the music arising from his breath was his witness; the peace flowing from his eyes was his witness; the happiness showering from his words and his silence was his witness. If the mind be mature then freedom from wealth, fame, status and ambition becomes very easy. They are, after all, games of childhood.

Thousands of people had collected outside the town to see and hear the saint Shrone. In listening to him, their minds were calm, like the burning flames of a candle in a windless spot. In that crowd there was also a nun by name Katiyani. When the evening approached, she asked her attendant: "You go and light the lamp in the house. I will not get up leaving this nectar-like speech". When the attendant reached home, she found that the house had been burgled. Inside, the thieves were lifting stores and outside their chief was guarding the house. She returned immediately. The chief of the thieves also followed her. The attendant approached Katiyani and told her in a nervous voice: "Mistress, there are thieves in the house. ' But Katiyani did not pay heed to her. She was lost in some other thoughts; she kept on listening to what she was listening; kept looking at what she was looking; kept sitting where she was sitting. She was in another world. Tears of love were flowing from her eyes. The attendant became nervous and shook her: "Mother, mother, the thieves have burgled the house. They are carrying all your gold ornaments".

Katiyani opened her eyes and said: "Oh mad one, do not bother; do not worry. Let them carry what they to want carry. All those clothes and ornaments are unreal. I was in ignorance. Therefore, they looked real. The day their eyes open, they will also find them unreal. As soon as the eyes open, you find that real gold which can neither be stolen nor snatched. I am looking at that gold. That gold is within the self". The attendant could not understand anything. She was lost and speechless. What had happened to her mistress? But the heart of the chief of thieves was moved as if within him some door had opened; as if in his soul some unlighted lamp was aflame. He returned and told his friends: "Friends, leave these bundles here. All these gold ornaments are unreal. Come with me. Let us also search for the same wealth on finding which the mistress of the house has discovered the gold ornaments as unreal. I have also been looking out for the same collection of gold. That is not far away. It is close by. It is within the self."

24.

After studying all scriptures, Kach, the son of the Brihaspati, came back to his father's house. Whatever could be known was known. But his mind was peaceless. Desire for pleasures was agitating him. He was restless on account of the heat of pride. Only to get rid of them, he had gone in search of knowledge; but restlessness was there in tact, and on the top of it the weight of knowledge had increased. This is what happens. what relation is there between the knowledge of scriptures and the birth of peace? There is no relation between them. On the contrary, that type of knowledge intensifies pride and opens in full the half-open

gates of restlessness. But is it proper to call it knowledge if it cannot provide peace? Knowledge provides peace and lightness. But could that which provides restlessness and heaviness also be knowledge? Ignorance is pain. But if knowledge is also pain where is happiness? If knowledge also does not provide peace, then it is perhaps impossible to find it. If peace cannot be found at the doors of truth where also could it be found? Then, is there no truth in scriptures? In the mind of Kach all these questions were rising like a storm. He was very much worried. He said to his father: "I have read all scriptures. Whatever could be learnt from the teacher, I have learnt. But I have not found peace in all that. I am very much worried and restless. Now, you kindly show me the way to peace. What shall I do to find peace?" His observation was correct. Peace is not found, nor can it be found, from scriptures; nor can any teacher give it. It is not a thing which can be found from outside. In fact there is no other way for its manifestation except through the self? What did Brihaspati tell Kach? He said: "Peace can be found in renunciation"

The desire of Kach for knowledge was not a mere curiosity. That was the deepest desire of his life. Therefore, he gave up all. He went into renunciation with full steam. He spent years of his life with one loin-cloth. With fasts and all kinds of suppression of the body, he performed penance. Years went by. But he could not hear the footsteps of peace coming near him. Then he gave up the loin-cloth also. He now started living stark naked. He thought, perhaps the greed of the loin-cloth had stood in his way. His renunciation was no doubt complete. But peace was still unknown. At last, he made the last preparation. He thought,

perhaps the body itself was the last obstacle. This also represents a desire to keep. In truth, penance and adamancy had dried up his body and it was there only in name. Even then it was there. He decided to end it. He lighted fire and became ready to give up his body. Whatever the cost, he must find peace. To attain it, he was determined to embrace even death. When the fire woods started burning fiercely he got ready to seek his father's permission to jump into it. But Brihaspati laughed stopped him and said: "Mad one, what will you gain by renouncing the body? As long as the mind is full of desires, ;t has attachment to them, so long nothing will be gained even by burning the body. Desire always puts on new bodies and pride finds new homes. Therefore, renunciation of the body is no renunciation. Renunciation of the mind is true renunciation, and in renunciation of the mind lies peace, because freedom from the mind is peace". For some moments Kach was speechless. Like a person who does not know what to do, he asked: "But how is the renunciation of the mind possible? Perhaps you too ask me the same question? Whoever is in search of peace, faces this basic problem. Whoever is engaged in search of truth and salvation has this curiosity. The mind itself is the obstruction. The mind itself is restlessness. What is this mind? Is not the desire to be something the mind itself? For a moment, kindly come out of sleep and see this truth. Is not the desire to be something, the race for being something, the thirst for being something, the mind itself? If there is no thirst for being something, where then is the mind? If even for a moment I am there, I am what I am, and there is no desire in me to be anything other than that, then where is mind? And if this is true, how can mind itself

search out peace and truth? Mind itself is in search of peace; and desire also belongs to it. What then is it that wants to be peaceful? What is it that wants to find the truth? What is it which is desirous of salvation? Is it not the mind itself? And if all this is mind, then what is the way to be free from it? In fact, renunciation of the mind cannot be achieved by any attempt or perseverance of the mind itself, because any attempt of the mind ultimately strengthens and gives power to itself, and can do so. Any of its actions is a follow up and research of its own desire. As a result, it is only natural that with any of its actions it should itself be fed and become strong? Therefore, by an action of the mind itself, it is impossible to be free from it. How can mind become its own death? Even in worldly desires it lives; in desire for salvation also it finds life. The same thing exists in wealth; the same in religion. Being unsuccessful in the world, disappointed, and getting bored, the same mind which wants the world and its pleasures starts wishing for peace, wishing for truth. The mind is the same, because basically the desire is the same. Where there is wish there is mind. Wish is enjoyment; Wish is also renunciation. From the desire itself are born all renunciation and sannyas All those are reactions of enjoyments; and where is salvation when there are reactions? Whatever action is the reaction of something, is tied to it, is born of it. It is another form of it. It is the same. Renunciation is also enjoyment. Renunciation is the world itself. Whether it is enjoyment or renunciation, world or sannyas, the original form of mind, the central concentration of mind remains undisturbed in both. The life of mind is desire. The thirst for being something, for getting something for reaching somewhere

is its very foundation stone. Therefore, there is peace neither in enjoyment nor in renunciation. Peace is there and only there, where mind is absent. The presence of mind is restlessness. Absence of mind is peace. Where mind does not exist, there exists that which is real. But you will ask "How could it be?" Friend, do not ask it; because it is the mind which is asking. The search for 'how' is its own. The search for ways and means is its own. Search for being something is its own. It always asks: How? No. Do not ask this. But observe what are the ways of mind. By what ways it gets united? By what methods does it get improved? By what methods does it become powerful? Surely, its ways are very subtle. Wake up to these ways. Do nothing; but merely keep awake. Be careful and aware of its forms and sub-forms. Understand the mind. Recognize it in its fullness. Be awake towards its actions and reactions, its attachments and detachments, its likes and dislikes. Let it be remembered every moment. Let it not be forgotten. Attention to it must be natural. Our eye on it must be automatic. Without any tension or concentration, with complete peace, our introduction with it should be thicker. This introduction and such knowledge alone brings about revolution. In fact, it is a revolution of knowledge. In knowing the mind, the mind itself disappears. In attempting to recognize it, it slips off because knowledge or sense are not desires. That is not a race for being or not being something. That is merely a wakefulness towards that which exists and which happens. Desire is always for the future; knowledge is always for the present. Therefore, the arrival of knowledge becomes the farewell to desire. Knowledge of the mind itself is freedom from the mind.

May it be remembered that this is not the freedom of the mind; it is freedom from the mind itself; and in this concentrated light of salvation, he that is God, is known.

25.

From morning till evening, I find hundreds c)f people indulging in calumny of one another. How quickly do we decide about others! In fact, nothing is more difficult than deciding about others. Perhaps no one, except God, has a right to pass judgement on others, because who else, other than God, possesses the necessary patience to judge a person, a small and very ordinary person?

Do we know each other? Even those who are very close to each other, do they know each other?

Do not even friends continue to be unknown and strange to each other?

But we claim to understand even the unknown and take decisions so quickly about them!

This haste is extremely ugly. But that person who keeps on thinking about others totally forgets thinking about the self; and such haste is utter ignorance also because with knowledge goes patience.

Life is very mysterious and those who get into the habit of taking hasty decisions withe)ut proper thinking fail to know it.

I have heard a story. It relates to the first world war. A commander told his soldiers: "Soldiers, Five of you are required for a very dangerous work. Therefore, those who are prepared to take the risk voluntarily make take two steps out of the line". He had just finished his talk when a horse rider came and diverted his attention. He had come to

deliver a very important message to him. After reading the message, he lifted his eyes towards the soldiers of his unit. Finding their lines intact, he was enraged. His eyes started burning and he cried: "You cowards, impotents; Is there not even one man amongst you all?" He showered many other abuses also. He also held out threats of punishment; and then alone he observed that not only one but all soldiers had come out of the line by two steps!

26.

One day, I sat by the side of a road. Sitting under the thick shade of a tree I was looking at the passers-by. Seeing them, several thoughts crossed my mind. They were running away somewhere -- children, young, old, women, men. They were all running away. Their eyes seemed to be searching for some one and their feet were busy on some long journey. But where were they running away to? What was their purpose; and will they in the end know that they have reached somewhere?

The same thought arises in me after seeing you. With that thought, I also get afflicted with a severe pain, because I know that you will not reach anywhere. You will not reach, because your mind and feet are running in the direction opposite to God.

The secret of reaching somewhere in life is: Move in the direction of God. Except that, no direction, no road leads to anywhere. Swim in the direction of God. Swimming against Him, a person only breaks and destroys himself. What is man's fear? What is his worry? What is his pain? What is his death?

I have seen: all these troubles crop up in our vain attempt to swim against God. Pride is pain; pride is disease; because pride is in the direction opposite to God; and opposition to God is opposition of self.

I have heard a story. A pilot of a small aeroplane was flying at the speed of 150 miles per hour. Suddenly, he discovered that he had fallen in the current of a deadly wind. The wind was very stormy. Possibly that was also running at the speed of 15 miles per hour, in the direction opposite to the direction of the plane. The life of the pilot, entangled in the fierce storm, was in danger; and the safety of his plane seemed impossible. The surprise was that all parts of the plane were working normally and the engines were making loud sounds, yet the plane was not moving by an inch. Afterwards, that pilot said: How strange was that experience; not to proceed even while running at the speed of 150 miles per hour! How fast I was going and yet I was going nowhere!

Is it not really correct that moving against oneself one cannot reach anywhere?

The happiness of life belongs to them who live in the self, know the self and attain the self.

Is it not true in life also? Is it not happening?

Those who are not moving in the direction of God will also find that they are going without doubt, yet not reaching anywhere.

God is the internal existence of the self; God is the very form of the self.

27.

Friends, What do I teach? I teach a small secret. I teach the secret of becoming a monarch in the world.
What could be a secret bigger than this small secret?
But you may ask how every one in the world could become a monarch? I say: "It can be. There is a big monarchy where everyone is a monarch!"
But everyone in the world whom we know is merely a slave. There, even those who are under illusion of thinking that they are monarchs are slaves.
There is a world outside the man; there is a world inside him also. In the outside world, nobody has ever been a monarch, although most of the people have struggled for that alone.
Perhaps you are also in the same struggle: In the same competition! But he who wants to become a monarch -- to conquer not the world, but the self.
Christ has said: "The kingdom of God lies in yourself."
Do not you know that those who have conquered kingdoms on the outside have lost the self? And how can he who loses himself become a monarch? To be a monarch, it is imperative to be at least the self.
No! No! The external world takes you deep into poverty. In that world those who look like monarchs are the slaves of their own slaves.
Desires, thirsts and ambitions do not permit freedom. On the other hand, they tie down in the thinnest and yet the strongest of bonds.
No chains, stronger than the chains of desires have so far been made or can be made in future. In fact no steel as strong as that has ever been made. How can a person bound down in these invisible chains can ever become a monarch?

There was a monarch: Frederic the Great of Prussia. One evening, outside the capital, he got a push from an old man. The path was narrow and the darkness of the evening was surrounding on all sides: Frederic asked that old man in anger: "Who are you?" That old man said: "A monarch". Frederic asked in amazement: "Monarch?" and then he cut a joke, "Which country do you rule?" That old man said: "The self".
Surely those who rule the self are monarchs.

28.
Why is this indifference towards religion?
And why is this indifference increasing every day?
I have heard a story: "There was a village. The residents there-of were very simple. Whatever anybody told them, they would accept. Outside their village, there was an idol of god. A saint came there. He collected all of them there and said: "Very bad. Very bad; Ram Ram; You fools; you live under shade and your god in the sun? put a shade on god. Do not you see how angry god is." The villagers were very poor. Somehow, by squeezing their own roofs they prepared a roof for god. After putting up the roof the saint went away to another village. He had charge of not only one village but many. There were many gods and the responsibility of providing shelter for all of them had been taken up by him. Then, after a few days, another saint came to that village. He was in anguish when he saw the roof on the god. He collected the village-folk and showed his temper to them. He said: "Sitaram, Sitaram." It is very bad. You fools, you have put a cover on god? Does he need your

cover? If there be a fire, all will be burnt up. Take it and throw off quickly. The villagers were surprised. But could they do that now? Whatever the saints say is always correct; and if you do not accept their word, then with their curse they can trouble you for several lives and can also make you rot in the hell. God is in their hand; and therefore, whatever they want they get done. Those poor people had to take off and throw away the cover. The labour of so many days, the power and the wealth of the poor people was wasted. Be it as it may, but was it a small piece of luck that they were saved from the ignominy of putting a cover on God! After taking away the cover the saint went away to another village. After all, he had not only one village to look after but several. There were many gods; and to keep all of them free from the cover was his responsibility. But soon thereafter another saint came to that village. This time the villagers were fully awake and even by mistake they would not go towards the idol of god. They did not know what other trouble might be created? They had stopped going that way at all.

I find that what happened in that village has happened in the whole world. The saints have got such ugly things done and such fears established in the minds of men in the name of religion that there is no wonder that people have stopped going in the direction of god.

Indifference to religion is ultimately indifference towards the fears and blind faiths spread by those so-called saints. Indifference to religion is indifference to exploitation. hypocrisy and foolishness which comes in the garb of religion.

Indifference to religion is indifference to the false complements of sects, and to hate jealousies and enmity created by them.
Indifference to religion is not indifference to it; but, in fact, it is indifference to all that which is not religion.

29.
The Prime Minister of a monarch died. He had before him the intricate problem of finding the most intelligent person of the state and making him the Prime Minister. Then after several types of tests, ultimately three persons were selected. Now, out of the three also one had to be selected. One day, before the selection test a rumour went round that the monarch was going to shut them in a room on the door of which a wonderful lock, prepared by the best mechanics of the state, was to be fixed and it could be opened only by the person most efficient in arithmetic. out of the three persons, two could not sleep that night on account of worry and excitement. They kept on studying throughout the night books on locks and trying to memorise the numbers and formulae of arithmetic. Before the day dawned, they were so much stuffed with arithmetic that it was perhaps impossible for them to add two and two. While going to the palace, they also concealed under their clothes a few books on arithmetic which could be needed any time. In their own esteem they were fully prepared, although on account of their keeping awake with the books throughout the night their minds were not under control and their feet were falling as if they were intoxicated. Treatises and knowledge also have their own intoxications. But to both of them the third person, who had slept peacefully at night, was

definitely looking mad. What else could his carefreeness indicate except madness? Both of them had been laughing, and were still laughing, on his foolishness. On reaching the palace they came to know that the rumour was surely true. Immediately on arrival they were shut into a big room on the door of which that much-talked about lock was fixed which was a superb invention of mechanical intelligence of the time. That lock was prepared on the basis of arithmetic and that was like a very difficult puzzle which could be solved only through arithmetic. All these things were known through rumours, and the arithmetical figures and remarks made on the lock also announced the same thing. After being shut in the room those three persons were made aware af the decision of the monarch that whoever opened that lock and was able to come out first would be appointed to the position of Prime Minister. Those two persons immediately started reading the marks on the lock and started using arithmetical figures. In between, they were also using the books which they had brought. It was winter season and from the big ventilators of the room cold wind of the morn was coming in. But their foreheads were sweating. The time was short, the problem of opening the lock was hard and in a short while the luck of their life was to be decided. Their hands were trembling and their breathing was fast. They were writing one thing and producing something else. But the person who had slept throughout night neither studied the lock, nor lifted his pen, nor solved any arithmetic. He was sitting patiently with his eyes shut. His face had neither any worry nor any excitement. On looking at him one could not feel that he was thinking about some thing. His fullness and thoughts

looked a steady flame of the lamp in a room where there was no wind. He was absolutely calm, silent and blank. But then suddenly he got up and with extremely natural and calm appearance he moved slowly to the gate of the room. Then very slowly he turned the handle of the door and it was surprising that, the door fell open. That lock was all the story connected with it a deception. But his two friends who were solving the arithmetical puzzles knew nothing about it. They did not even know that one of their friends was no longer inside. This astonishing truth was known by them only when the monarch came inside and said: "Gentlemen, now stop this arithmetic. He who had to come out has already come." Those poor chaps were not able to trust their own eyes. Their friend who was undeserving in all respects, was standing behind the monarch. Finding them without words, the monarch also told them: "Even in life this is of primary importance that we should first of all find out whether a problem really exists or not, whether the lock is actually closed or not. He who does not find out the problem and gets involved in solving it is naturally misled and is miscarried for ever."
This story is strangely true.

I have found the same thing even in relation to God His door has also been open since the beginning and all rumours about the locks on that door are absolutely untrue. But the anxious candidates wanting to enter his gates carry their scriptures with them out of fear of the locks. Then these scriptures and precepts themselves become the locks for them. They remain sitting outside the door. How could they enter the door unless they had solved the arithmetical

problems through their scriptures? Rarely does some one muster the courage to reach the door without the scriptures. I reached there just like that; and on reaching I found that, so far as the eyes could go, the learned ones sat buried under the heaps of their own scriptures and were so engrossed in solving some problems that they could not even feel the arrival of a person so undeserving as I. I reached and turned the handle of the door and found that it was already open. In the first instance, I felt that due to my luck the door-keepers might have made some mistake. Otherwise, how could it be possible that a person who knew no scriptures, no precepts, could find entrance into the world of truth? And I entered in fear. But those who were already inside told me that the rumour about the closing of the door of God was spread by the Satan and was an absolutely baseless rumour because his doors were always open. Can the doors of love be also closed? Can the doors of truth be also closed?

30.

How surprising it is that man accepts birth?but not death, while birth and death are the two ends of the same event? Death is hidden in birth. Is not birth only the beginning of death? Thereafter from non-acceptance of death, fear; from fear the run. The frightened and the run-away mind becomes unable to understand death. But howsoever one may run it is impossible to run away from death. That has been presented in the birth itself. It is not possible to run away from death; on the other hand, after running in all ways, at the end of it, it is discovered that only death has been reached.

There is an old story. Vishnu came to Kailash to meet Shiva. His vehicle was Garud. After dismounting Vishnu, Garud was waiting at the gate. Just at this time his eyes fell on a pigeon, trembling with fear, and sitting at the top of the door. He asked him about the cause of his fear. That pigeon started weeping and said: "Just recently the God of Death has entered his palace. On seeing me, he faltered, for a while, looked at me in surprise, and then, with a smile, went ahead moving about his club. His mysterious smile is nothing except an indication of my sure death. My end is near". And that pigeon started weeping all the more loudly. The Garud said: "Poh, Poh! You are unnecessarily so much afraid. You are still young and therefore, there is no possibility of your dying through some disease. So far as the fear of enemy is concerned, you come and sit down on my back. In an instant, I will take you to the Lokalok hill which is thousands of millions miles away from here; there will be no possibility of any of your enemies being there". On receiving this solution the pigeon felt revived, and in an instant Garud reached him on a lonely hill where he could move about without any enemy. But as soon as the Garud returned he met the God of Death who was coming out of the gate. The garud smiled and said: "Sir, That pigeon is no more here. He is living without fear on the Lokalok hill which is thousands of millions miles away. I have just returned after leaving him there." On hearing this the God of Death laughed loudly and said: "So you have ultimately reached him there? I was surprised only to think how he was here? He had to go into the mouth of Death within a few moments on the lokalok hill.

31.

A young man came. He was in readiness to renounce the world. Very soon after getting ready in all respects he would take up Sannyas. He was very happy; because his preparations were going to be almost complete. When I heard him, I started laughing and told him: "I had heard about preparations for the world. What is this preparation for renunciation? Is it necessary to make preparations and to plan even for renunciation? And will the renunciation, so well-planned, ever be renunciation at all? Is it also not an extension of the worldly mind? World and renunciation cannot co-exist in the same mind. A worldly mind could never be a renouncing mind. The change over from the world to renunciation cannot take place without a basic revolution in the mind. That basic revolution itself is renunciation. Sannyas is neither change of dress, nor change of name, nor change of the house. That is a change of outlook. That is a total change of the mind of the self. For that revolution, the same currents do not work which are successful in the world. The arithmetic of the world is not only useless but even an obstruction for that revolution. As the rules of dream do not work while awake, similarly the truths of the world do not remain truths in renunciation. After all, Sannyas is wakefulness from the dream of world."

Then I stopped, and looked at that young man. He looked somewhat pained. Perhaps I had given a jolt to his preparations and he had come with that expectation to me. Without saying anything, he started going back and then I

told him: "Listen. Hear one more story: There was a saint named Ajar Kaiwan. A person came to him at mid-night and said: 'Your Honour, I have taken a vow that I will give up all pleasure of the mortal world. I have resolved to break up the bonds of world.' If I were there I would have told him: 'Oh, fool, he who swears is a weak man and he who decides to give up never does so. And even if he does so, he holds fast to giving up itself. Renunciation is not a resolve of the ignorant mind. That is a natural shade of knowledge'. But I was not there; Kaiwan was there. He told that person: 'You have rightly thought'.

That person was pleased and went away. He returned after some days and said: "I am for the present preparing a mattress and dress for the beggar. As soon as I collect my things I will become a beggar.' But this time even Kaiwan could not say that he had thought correctly. He said: "Friend, it is only to give up the collections that some one becomes a beggar and you are worried to collect those very things. Go, go back to your world. You are not yet able to renounce."

32.
When for the worship of God I see you going to the temples I start thinking whether God exists only in temples! Because outside the temples there is neither the glamour of purity in your eyes nor the sound of prayers in your breaths. Outside the temples you are just like those people who have never been to the temples. Does this fact not prove the futility of your going to the temples? Is it possible that outside the stairs of the temple you could be harsh and

inside compassionate? Is it credible that the cruel minds would be full of love immediately on getting entry through the doors of temples? How can prayers to God be born in the hearts which have no love for the universe?
He whose life itself is not love, cannot have prayer in that life.
And he who cannot see God in every atom cannot find God anywhere.

It is an incident of a night. An unknown traveller reached the temple of Mecca in a tired state and went to sleep. Finding his unpious feet towards the holy stone of Kaaba, the priests lost their temper. They pulled him up from his sleep and said: "What a sin have you committed? This temerity to insult the holy stone of the temple? Is it the way to sleep? Surely, only an atheist can keep his feet towards the temple of God! Even after observing their angry postures and hearing their insulting harsh words that traveller started laughing and said: "My dear, I will spread my feet to any side where God does not exist. You be kind and put my feet in that very direction. So far as I am concerned, I find his temple on all sides and in all directions." This strange traveller was Nanak. How true is what he said! God exists surely on all sides. But I ask whether he does not exist in the feet also? He is there. What else is there except Him? Existence? He is the entire existence. But the eyes that see Him only in temples, idols and holy rivers often become dazed when they see Him in His fullness.

One day I was in a forest. It was rainy season and the trees were full of happiness. I told my companions: "Do you see how happy are the trees? Why? Because one has become what one actually is. If the seed be one thing and the tree wishes to be something else, there will not be so much happiness in the forest, because the trees know nothing about the ideals; therefore, they have become what their nature desired them to be. Beauty lies where development is in keeping with the form and the nature. Man is in misery; because he is against himself. He fights with his own roots and is constantly struggling to be different from what he is. This way he loses himself and also loses the heaven which is everybody's natural right.

"Friends, is it not desirable that you should wish to be what you could be? Is it not desirable that you should give up all efforts to be anything except your own self? Is it not in that desire that the mainspring of all miseries lives? What attempts could be more impossible and meaningless than the desire to be different from the self? Everyone can be only that which he can be, because it is only in the seed that the development of a tree lies. The desire to be something else can only lead to failure; failure, because how could that which is not hidden in the self from the beginning appear in the end? Life is a manifestation of that which is covered and hidden right since the birth. Development is mere uncovering; and where the hidden does not become manifest, misery comes into being. Just as a mother will find herself in unbearable and undescribable she carries the child in her womb for all her life, similarly those persons find themselves in misery who do not become what they were destined to be. But I find that every one is running the

same race. All of them want to what they are not and they cannot be so. What is the ultimate result? The result is that they do not become what they could have been. What he could not be, he does not become in any case; but he is depirived of what he could have become.

A king of the scheduled tribes went to a big city for the first time. He wanted to get himself himself photographed. He was taken to a studio. That photographer had a board at his gate on which was written:
Have yourself photographed as you like.
Just as you are Rs. l0/-
Just as you think you are Rs. 15/-
Just as you want to show yourself to others: Rs. 20/-
Just as you wish you should have been: Rs. 25/-

That simple king was very much surprised with this and enquired if persons other than those wanting to have the first type of photograph also came? He was told that a person wanting to have the first type of photograph had not yet appeared on the shop.

May I ask what type of photograph would you have liked to have from that photographer? What does your mind say? Don't you get the desire for the last type of photograph within yourself? It may be a different thing if you don't have so much money with you. Pressure of circumstances is different; otherwise who would like to have the first type of photograph?

But that fool ofthe king got himself photographed for the first type only, and said "I have come here to get a photograph of myself and not of someone else"
A similar board has all along been hanging at the door of life. God had hung it there much before he made the man. Whatever is hypocrisy in this world is born out of the desire of being different from the self. When one fails to be different from oneself, then one becomes busy in appearing to be different from the self. Is it not what we call hypocrisy? And if he fails even in this attempt he becomes perturbed. Then he feels free to imagine himself what he wants to imagine.
But whether it is hypocrisy or madness, origin of either lies in refusing to accept oneself. The first symptom of a healthy person is his acceptance of the self. In life, he comes to get a picture of himself and not of someone else. All attempts to mould oneself in the frames of others are indications of a diseased mind. The so-called ideals taught to man, and the inspirations given to him, to follow others do not allow him to accept himself; and then his journey takes a wrong direction even from the beginning. This type of civilisation has grasped the man as a chronic disease would do. How ugly and deformed the man has become? There is nothing healthy or natural in him. Why? Because in the name of culture, civilisation and education, his own nature has been constantly murdered. If the man does not get alerted out of this conspiracy, then he will get destroyed to his very roots. That will not be a murder of culture; it will be only its development. Culture is not in opposition to nature; it is its development. The future of man can be determined not by some external ideals but by his inner

nature. Then a natural and inner discipline is born, which opens and uncovers the face of the self to such an extent that the truth might be seen. Therefore, I say: "Select yourself. Accept yourself. Search and develop yourself. Other than the self, there is no ideal for any one, there could be none. Friend, imitation is suicide; and remember that God can never be found in dependence on others."

34.
Early in the morning a friend came. His eyes were burning with anger and hatred. He was uttering very harsh, poisoned and hot words in respect of some one. I patiently heard him and asked whether he had heard about an incident. He was in no mood to hear anything. Even then he said "What incident?" When I started laughing, he became a little relaxed. Then I said to him: "A psychologist was conducting a research about love and hatred. To a class of 15 students of a university, he said that they should write down, within 30 seconds, the first **Letters** of the names of other young men, who they may consider worth hating. One young man could not write the name of anybody; others wrote a few names. One wrote the maximum, that is thirteen names. The truth which came out from this experiment was very surprising. Those young men who had mentioned the largest number of names whom they hated were themselves hated by most of the others; and the most wonderful and meaningful thing was that the name of the person who had written no names, was not written by anybody else."

Those whom a person meets on the path of life very often prove themselves a mirror. Do not we find our own reflections in others? If you have hatred in you, you find others hate-worthy. That hatred itself creates and invents the hateful. These creations and inventions are also not meaningless. This way a person is saved the trouble of seeing what is hateful in himself. When you make a mountain of a mole hill and see it in others, then what is like a mountain in you starts looking like a mole-hill. There are only two ways of escaping the pain af being one-eyed: either you cure your other eye or you imagine that the others have lost their both. Surely the other way appears to be easier; because in that, nothing is to be done; it is sufficient only to imagine.

Let us remember that when we meet others, we should consider them as mirror and whatever we see in them we should first of all search in ourselves. In this way, in the mirror of day-to-day relations, a person becomes busy in searching his own self. Running away from the world and its relations is not only cowardice, it is also useless. What is right is that we should use those relations for a search of the self In their absence, it is as impossible to find out oneself as it is to see one's own face without a mirror. In the form of others, we constantly keep meeting our own selves. Heart, which is full of love, sees love in all others. Ultimately the perfection of this experience brings you face to face with God. On this very earth, there are people who live in hell and there are others who live in heaven. The main spring of pain and pleasure, hell and heaven, is within

ourselves and whatever is within us is thrown out on the outside screen. It is the eyes of man which do not see any thing other than death among the things of this world; it is again the eyes of man which can observe the eternal beauty and music of God in this universe. Therefore, what appears outside is not the eternal and the basic in life; but it is what is inside. Those who have their eyes constantly on this truth become free from the exterior and get settled in the interior. Those who bear this main spring in mind in pleasure and pain, in hatred and love, in friend and enemy, find that ultimately there is neither pleasure nor pain, neither enemy nor friend, except the self. I am my own enemy; and I am my own friend.

35.

I was on the hills. A few friends were with me. One day, we went to a valley where the rocks produced very clear echoes. A friend produced the sound of a dog and there were dogs barking on the hills; and then some one produced the sound of kokil and the valley started resounding with 'kuho kuho'. I said: "The world is also like this. Whatever we throw at, it is returned to us. Flowers beget flowers and thorns beget thorns. For a heart, full of love, the entire world starts showering love; and for a person full of hatred painful flames of fire start burning all round."

Then I told a story to those friends: A young boy went out for the first time to the forest near his village. He was very much afraid of and alert against loneliness. Just then, he heard some creeping sound in the bushes. Surely, somebody was secretly following him. He shouted loudly

and asked: "Who is there? The hills asked a bit more loudly "who is there?" Now he was fully convinced that some one was hidden. He was afraid even otherwise. His hands and feet started trembling, and his heart started pounding. But to give courage to himself, he told the hiding person: "You coward!". There was the echo: "You coward!" For the last time he collected his nerves and shouted: "I will kill you". The hill and the forests also shouted "I will kill you." Then that boy ran fast towards the village. The echo of his own feet sounded as if the other man was chasing him and now he did not have the courage even to turn back and see. On reaching the door of his house, he fell down unconscious. When he came back to his senses, every thing came to light. On hearing all this his mother laughed loudly and said: "You go there again tomorrow and tell that mysterious person what I tell you. I am fully aware of that person. He is a very nice and loveable man. That boy went there the next day. On reaching, he said: "My friend!' There was the echo of 'My friend! ' This friendly sound consoled him and he said: 'I love you!'. The hills and the forest all repeated; 'I love you!"

Is not the story of the echo the story of our so-called life? Are we not all children and strangers in the forest of this world who hear our own a echoes, become afraid and run? Is it not truly the same state?

But remember that if 'I will kill you' is an echo, so also is 'I love you'. Getting free from the first echo and getting in love with the other is no escape from childhood. Some are afraid of the first echo and some start loving the other. But basically, there is no difference between the two. Immaturity is hidden in both. He who knows, lives in

freedom from both illusions. The truth of life is not in echoes; it is hidden in the self.

36.

I had just got out of my sleep when I got the news that someone was murdered in the neighbourhood. Every body was busy talking about it. There was sensation in the air and the eyes of men which were normally lustreless, were shining at that time. Neither any one had pain nor sympathy; only a diseased and undesirable feeling was visible. Can death and murder also give pleasure? Can destruction also bring happiness? May be it is so. Otherwise, public mind could not be so much enthused in wars.

When the current of life cannot proceed on the path of creation then all of a sudden it gets busy in destruction; then, for its manifestation, the only alternative is destruction. He who does not make himself creative, changes the direction of his life to destruction in spite of himself.

In individual, in society, in nations, there is all over an anxiety for destruction. His progress towards destruction ultimately be comes suicidal. If the taste for destruction develops, ultimately it destroys the self. There is not much difference between the killer and the self-killer. The extremity of violence changes into violence against the self. I knew that person who was murdered at night, and I also knew the man who had murdered him. They were old enemies and for years they were searching for an opportunity to kill each other. Perhaps, they had no other ambition in life except this big work. Perhaps for the same

reason the murderer rendered himself to the hands of law after committing the murder. What had he to do by living now? The one for whom he lived was no longer there! Is it not surprising that most of us live only for their enemies? Those who live and die for friends are very few! Not love but hatred itself has become the basis of life: and then it should be only natural that one finds a hidden pleasure in death and our life should find a helpless anxiety and attraction for destruction. Individuals are not attracted without reason to violence, and nation to wars.

What is this hatred? It is not a revenge on others for not being able to take one's own life to the summits of happiness? Surely, for what we cannot achieve we make others responsible; and we find an easy and simple way out of self-remorse.

What is this enmity? Is it not an announcement of one's own failure to be friendly?

Does enmity end by ending the enemy?

Friend, enmity gives birth to enemy. Therefore, the enemy can be destroyed, but the enmity still remains. Can friendship be destroyed with the death of the friend? No? Then how could enmity be destroyed by ending the enemy? The friend and the enemy are seen outside; but the origin is within the self. Ganges of life is outside; but the Gangotri (the source of Ganges) is always within. I, for one, hear in every body the echo of myself. Whatever I am, is reflected in others.

I am reminded of an incident:

It was a new-moon night. A person murdered another and entered the latter's house. There was silence all round. But within himself there was lot of noise and disturbance. Full

of fear, with trembling hands, he opened the door. It was surprising; the door was not closed from within; It was just stuck up. But what is this? As soon as he opened the door, he saw that a strong and cruel man stood in front with a gun in his hand. Possibly, it was a watchman. There was no way to return. Death was in front. There was no time even to think. In self-defence he fired a bullet. In a moment all was over. With the sound of the bullet the entire house resounded, and with the strike of the bullet something got broken and fell into pieces. What was this? The man who fired was stunned. There was nobody in front. There was the smoke of the bullet and a mirror that had been crushed to pieces.

The same thing is seen in life also. In our imagination for self-defence, we start fighting with the mirrors. Because there is fear inside, therefore the enemy starts appearing on the outside. Because death is inside, therefore the murderer starts fearing on the outside. But can enemies be finished by breaking the mirrors?

The enemy can be destroyed in friendship, and not in his death. Everything else, except love, is defeat.

Enemy lives in the self, in hatred of the self, in fear of the self, in enmity and jealousy. But it starts appearing on the outside. Yellowness exists in the eyes of a jaundiced person; but he sees yellow in the whole world. What is the right thing to do in such diseases? Will it be right to eliminate the yellow colour from the world? Or to treat one's own eyes? The world is as the eyes see it. In one's own eyes are hidden the colours of the enemy and the friend. Nobody wants an enemy; yet we keep on cherishing enmity. Even from the desire to eliminate the enemy it is

evident that we do not want the enemy but want a friend. But we nourish hatred in our blood. It is absolute foolishness. We want to give life to a friend, but we do not give birth to love. In that case, we want friends; enemies are born and then they are murdered; but, in fact, only friends are murdered. We sow the seeds of poison and we desire the fruits of nectar! This is an impossibility.

37.

A friend sometimes comes to me. On seeing him, I am always reminded of a saying of Socrates. Socrates said to a beggar: Friend, out of your torn, beggarly clothes nothing but pride peeps out."

The ways of pride are very subtle. The cover of humility is its subtlest form. Such humility covers it less and reveals it more. It is like those clothes which do not cover the body but only expose it. In fact, neither the cover of love eliminates hatred nor the clothes of humility cover the nakedness of pride. Just as the coals are hidden and safe under the ashes and the slightest stir of wind exposes it, similarly in the individuals truth remains buried; slightest scratching breaks the curtain and exposes it. Such invisible diseases are much more dangerous and killing than the visible diseases; but in deceiving himself man's skill is very much developed, and he uses this skill to such an extent that it becomes his very nature. For thousands of years, in our attempts to bring civilization by force nothing has been achieved except this skill. Not in destroying nature but in covering it, man has certainly succeeded; and in this way the so-called civilization has proved itself as a chronic disease.

How can a civilization be born in opposition to nature? From that not the civilization but non-civilization alone will flourish. True civilization is a beautiful exposition of nature. Self-deception cannot carry a man anywhere. But as compared to self-revolution, self-deception is very easy; and every time it is a mistake to select the easiest. Easiest is not always the best. How can you select the easiness of coming down, while you are wanting to touch the summits of the mountains of life? It is very easy to deceive oneself. In deceiving others, there may be the fear of being caught; in deceiving oneself even that fear is absent. Those who deceive others suffer punishment and insult on this earth; and even in the other world the severe tortures of the hell await them; but those who deceive themselves get respect in this world, and in the other world also they think they deserve the heavens. It is for this reason that man deceives himself without fear. Otherwise, how could all hypocrisies of civilization and religion be born?

But can you hide and destroy what is true?

Can man succeed in deceiving the self, alE others and ultimately God himself.

Is not all this race sheer foolishness?

It is proper to know the self as he is; because without accepting the reality of oneself there can be no real change in the self. As, for bodily health, it is necessary to know the disease with hundred per cent truth, similarly for spiritual health it is necessary to know the inner diseases. To cover the disease is not in the interest of the patient, but in the interest of the disease itself. Diagnosis is unavoidable for treatment, and those who want to escape diagnosis remain devoid of treatment also.

A sculpture was making a statue of Ralf Waldo Emerson. Emerson used to see intently the developing form on the stone every day; and as the statue was developing, he was becoming more and more serious. At last one day, when the statue was almost complete, Emerson became very serious on seeing it. The sculptor asked him the reason for his seriousness, and he replied: "I observe that as the statue is becoming more like myself; it is becoming unshapely and ugly."

I consider this power to see myself in my ugliness, nakedness and animalism to be the first step of the ladder of self-revolution.

Only that man who is able to see the ugliness in himself is capable of giving beauty to himself. Without the first ability the second one is not born; and he who covers up his own ugliness and gets busy in forgetting it is left ugly for ever. To know and accept the 'Ravan' in oneself is the first inevitable step to become the Ram'. The ugliness of life remains hidden and safe in man's unconsciousness towards it. I will have to first of all know myself as I am. There is no alternative. If on this very first point of the journey we give room to falsehood then the truth can never be achieved in the end. But we disown the reality of self because of its ugliness and start nourishing an unreal and imaginary personality. This desire for beauty is allright: but the path is not correct. The ugliness of the self cannot be eliminated by putting on beautiful masks. On the other hand, because of the masks it keeps on becoming all the more ugly and unshapely. Then slowly the knowledge of the self disappears even from the self; and we remain acquainted and recognize only the false masks. If then the mask is lost

it becomes impossible to recognize the self. A lady went to the treasury to take out some money. The Treasurer asked her. "How shall I believe that you are yourself?" She quickly took out a mirror from her bag, saw and said: "Believe me. I am what I am."
In search of truth, in search of the actual existence of the self, the first thing is to fight with your own masks. Without finding out one's real face, neither one can discover oneself nor imitate it. The palace of truth stands on the foundations of reality; and no other power except truth can bring civilization.

38.
At night, a young woman came and said:
I want to serve you". I told her: "If you forget the 'I', service will automatically follow".
What else except pride is an obstruction for becoming service in life?

Pride demands service. In fact, it only wants everything. It gives nothing. It is incapable of giving. That is not possible for it. Pride has always been a beggar. Therefore, it is impossible to find anyone more miserable and poorer than a proud man.
Only he can serve who is a king. What can a person give when he has nothing with him? Before giving, it is essential to have something.
What is service? Is love itself not service? And love is born only in that consciousness where 'I' has been buried.
In the death of 'I', is the birth and life of love.
From the funeral pyre of 'I', the seed of love germinates.

Those who are full of 'I', are empty of love.
'I' is the centre of exploitation. Its service is also exploitation? Even in that, the same prospers and finds strength. Is humanity unaware of the ego of servants? There is the cover of humility even in the pride of an exploiter; but in the humility of a servant there is an announcement of pride.
Remember that love is not vocal and service is silent.
And also remember that love is its own appreciation and service is its own reward.
I am reminded of a very strange contest. Two friends went to the door of a teacher to learn painting. They were both very poor. They did not have even two breads. Both of them decided that, to begin with, one of them will practise art and the other one will take to labour and feed himself and the other; later on, the first one will earn and the other one will learn. One of them started painting at the feet of his teacher. Years came and passed by. The effect was tough. There was no question of time. With his full mind, that young man was busy in his effort. Slowly, he started gaining fame. In the world of art, his luck rose. The name of that young man was Albrecht Durer. But his friend was busy in an effort even more difficult than his own He was digging pits and breaking stones; cutting woods and carrying loads. Slowly and slowly, he completely forgot that he too had come to learn painting; and when it was his turn to learn the art, it was observed that his hands had become so still, so hard and so unshapely that is was impossible to paint with them. On this mishap, the first young man started weeping; But the other one was very happy. He said: "What difference does it make whether it is

your hand or mine that makes the pictures? Are your hands also not mine?" The first young man became a great painter; but the name of his friend, who made him the painter through sweat and toil is not known to any one. But is not his unknown service a shining example of his love? Are they not blessed who serve incognito and search for the opportunities for service? Not only those who are known but also those who are not known, create. There is no effort or prayer bigger than the service done by the unknown hands of love. Albrecht Durer has made a picture of the hands of his friend in prayer. Is it really easy to find such beautiful hands? Is it possible to find hands so pious as those? And can any hands other than those have a right to pray? How few 'hands' can have the good luck to love and pray as those hands did?

39.
I was in a big city. Some young men came there to meet me. They started asking: "Do you believe in God?" I said: "No. What relation is there between belief and God? I know God."
Then I told them a story:

There was a revolution in some country. The revolutionaries of that place were busy in changing everything. They were determined to destroy religion also. In the same context an old beggar was arrested and brought to the Court. They asked that beggar: "Why do you believe in God?" That beggar said: "No gentlemen, I do not believe. But God is there. What should I do now?" They asked: "How do you know that He exists?" That old man

said: "After opening my eyes ever since I began seeing I have seen none except Him".
That beggar's replies served as ghee to the fire. Those revolutionaries became very angry and said: "Very soon we will kill all your monks and nuns. What then?"
That old man laughed and said: "As God may wish! "
'But we have decided to destroy all signs of religion. We will not leave any sign of God in the world."
That old man said: "My son, this is a very difficult job that you have selected. But as the God may will! How will you destroy all signs? Whatever remains will announce His existence. At least you will be there, and you will announce His existence. It is impossible to eliminate God, because God is all-pervading."
All these misunderstandings cropped up because God was compared to a man.
God is not a person. He is what He is.
And the thought of believing in God has also created a lot of misunderstanding.
What is the meaning of believing in light? That can be seen only when the eyes open.
Belief is a supporter of ignorance and ignorance is a sin.
Not the blind faith, with eyes tied under cloth, but the discrimination with eyes fully open can take a man upto the truth.
Truth is God. There is no other God except the truth.

40.
I appeal for a change of mind from its very roots. On the surface of body, no change has any real value. The mere change of conduct is not sufficient, because in the absence

of a revolution within, that is nothing more than self-deception.

But even those in whose minds the idea of changing the self arises, get busy changing the clothes in haste without changing the heart. This is the last manner of deceiving the self. It is very necessary to beware of it. Otherwise even renunciation remains only an external event. The world is external but if even renunciation is external then life will get lost on very dark paths.

The path of desire is no doubt ignorance. But if renunciation is also external, it will also take you on paths which are full of ignorance.

In truth, the very fact of the consciousness being outside onself is ignorance and darkness. Thereafter, it makes no difference whether that outside relates to the world or to renunciation. If the mind is surrounded by out-sidedness, then enjoyments keep it out and so also renunciation.

If the mind is free from outside then it easily reverts to the self.

The indication of the success of the exterior is the world. The knowledge of the futility of the exterior is renunciation.

I have heard a story:

In a city there occurred two deaths on the same day. It was a very strange coincidence. One was a yogi and the other was a prostitute; both left this world on the same day and at the same moment. Both lived in houses opposite to each other. Both lived together and died together. This surprise was there in the city; and there was a deeper surprise also. That is not known to any one except the Yogi and the prostitute. As soon as they died the messenger of death

came from above to take them. But thase messengers carried the prostitute to heaven and the Yogi to the hell!
The yogi said: "Friends, undoubtedly there is some mistake. You are carrying the prostitute to the heaven and me to the hell? What is this injustice? What is this darkness?" Those messengers said: "No, gentleman; there is neither a mistake nor injustice nor darkness. Kindly see a little below." The yogi looked down towards the earth. There, his body was decorated with flowers and it was being carried in a big procession. Thousands of men were carrying his body to the burning ground to the sound of Ramdhun. In the burning ground a pyre of sandal wood was ready for him. On the other side of the road, the dead body of the prostitute was lying. There was nobody even to lift it away; and, therefore, the vultures and the dogs were tearing it off and eating it.
On seeing this the yogi said: "People on the earth are doing far greater justice!"
Those messengers replied: "Because men on the earth know only what was on the outside. Their approach is no deeper than the body. But the real question is not about the body, it is of the mind. In the body you are a sannyasi. But what was in your mind? Was not your mind always loving the prostitute? Did not the desire always live in your mind that the beautiful music and dance going on in the house of that prostitute was very pleasant and your life was without pleasure? On the other side was the prostitute. She was constantly thinking how blissful was the life of the yogi. At night, when you used to sing the songs of devotion she would weep, lost in feelings. On one side, you were getting filled up with the ego of being a sannyasi; on the other, she

was becoming more and more humble with the torture of sins. You went on becoming harsher on account of your so-called knowledge, and she went on becoming softer on account of the knowledge of her ignorance. Finally, what were left was your personality, eaten up by ego, and hers free of it. At the time of death, you had pride and desire in you; in her mind, there was neither pride nor desire. Her mind was full of the light of God, love and prayer.
The truth of life does not live in the external cover. Then what use it will be to change the exterior?
Truth is very internal, internal to the extreme.
To discover it, one has to work not on the circumference of personality but on the centre of it. Find out that centre. If that is found, Truth will definitely be found because it is after all hidden in the self.
Religion is not a change of circumference; it is a revolution of the inner being.
Religion is not a demonstration of the circumference; it is hard work on the centre.
Religion is labour, on the self. It is from that labour that the 'I' is destroyed and the truth is attained.

41.
Pride makes the heart stonelike. It is the death of all that is true, good and beautiful in life. Therefore there is no other obstacle in our way to God except the pride. How will a stone-hearted person know love? And where there is no love, how could God be there? For love we require a simple and humble heart -- simple and full of feeling; and as deep as the pride is, so deep does the heart loose its simplicity and feeling.

What is religion? When some one asks me I say: "Dharma is simplicity of heart, the feeling power of heart".
But what is current in the name of religion is the manifestation of pride in its very subtle and intricate forms. Pride is the root of all violence.
"I am" -- this very feeling is violence. Then "I am something" is a bigger violence. A violent mind cannot find the true beauty; because violence makes oneself harsh. Harshness means closing the doors of the self and how can one who has closed within himself be related to all?
There was a saint Hasan. He had been hungry for several days. He stayed outside a village. Some of his companions were also there. They were also tired and hungry on account of the long journey. And as soon as they reached and settled in that broken house, an unknown person brought them lot of food and fruits and said: "This insignificant offering is for those who practise penance and who have renounced". When that person left, Hasan told his companions: "Friends, I will have to go to sleep without food even tonight; because where had I practised penance and where am I renouncer? In truth where am I myself?
'I am not' -- whoever may know this, knows God.
'I am not' -- whoever can discover it can find God.

42.
It is an incident of a mid day. Some people came and said: "God is not there and religion is all hypocrisy." On hearing their words, I started laughing and they asked: "Why do you laugh?"
I said: "Because ignorance is vocal and knowledge is silent. Is it so easy to say anything about the existence or non-

existence of God? Are not all decisions, arising out of the meagre knowledge of man, worth laughing?" Those who know the limits of their own knowledge do not take decisions; but remain speechless; and in that mysterious moment they sometimes exceed their limits also. At that time, they know themselves and also the truth; because truth exists in the self and in truth is the existence of the self. Is not a drop in the ocean and ocean in the drop? Is it proper that the drop, without knowing itself, should want to know the ocean? And when it fails to find it, it might say that the ocean does not exist. If the drop can know itself it can know the ocean, also. The thought of God is meaningless. I ask you: "Do you know yourself? Is any one without this condition competent to take a decision about the existence or non-existence of God?"

"Do you know yourself?", on hearing this question those friends started looking at one another. And do not you also hearing this question start looking at one another? But remember that without knowing the self there is no utility or appreciation of life. I repeated to those friends the conversation that took place in Greece thousands of years ago:

Some one asked an old saint: What is the biggest thing among the things of this world?

The saint answered: "The sky; because whatever exists, exists in the sky and the sky itself does not exist in anything;

He asked: "And what is the best?"

The saint said: "Good temper; because everything can be sacrificed on good temper and good temper cannot be lost for anything."

He asked: "And the most mobile?"
The saint said: "Thought"
He asked: "And the easiest?"
The saint said: "Advice".
He asked: "And the most difficult?"
The saint said: "Knowledge of the self".
Surely it appears to be most difficult to know the self, because in order to know it everything else has to be given up. Without giving up all knowledge, the knowledge of the self is not possible.
Ignorance is an obstruction in knowledge of the self.
Knowledge is an obstruction in knowledge of the self.
But there is another state also where there is neither knowledge nor ignorance. It is in that state that the knowledge of the self manifests itself.
I call that very state as 'samadhi', that is meditation.

43.
What shall I say about religion? Religion is the door to life through the process of death.
One night I was on a boat. The boat was big and there were many friends in company. I asked them: "This river is flowing fast but where to?" Some one said: "Towards the ocean." Truly rivers run to the ocean. But is not the running of rivers to the ocean going towards their own death? Rivers will after all get lost in the ocean. Perhaps for this very reason pools do not go towards the ocean. Which wise man ever tries to go towards his own death? For the same reason, the so-called wise also do not go towards religion. What is an ocean to a river is religion to a man Religion is to loose oneself completely in the universe. That is a great

death for the ego. Therefore, those who want to save themselves become the pools of pride and save themselves from merging into the ocean of God. The inevitable condition of merging with the ocean is to eliminate the self. But that death is not really a death, because compared to the life which is gained through that merger, the life that we know becomes death. I am saying so after dying myself. For finding an entry in true life one has to die in the false life.

To gain existence in the supreme, one has to loose the atom.

But what is death on one side becomes life on the other. Death of ego is the life of the soul. That is not destruction. That is existence. Those who cannot understand this truth remain devoid of life.

Friend, the ocean is not the life of river; it is its death although that way it appears to be safe. And ocean is not the death of river; it is its life, although that way it appears to have destroyed it.

One day Radha asked Krishna: "My lord, this flute is always on your lips. I am very jealous of it." This flute of bamboo gets so much of the nectar-like touch of your sweet lips that I am dying of jealousy. Why is it so close to you? Why is it so dear to you? Every time I think: I wish I could be the flute of Krishna. And in future lives, I want to be the flute which rests on your lips."

On hearing this Krishna laughed loudly and said: "Dear, it is very difficult to be a flute. Perhaps there is nothing more difficult than that. Only he who can completely annihilate himself, can become the flute. This flute is not merely a piece of bamboo; in fact, it is the heart of a lover. It has no

tune of its own. It has made the tunes of the lover, its own music. I sing, it sings. If I am silent, it is silent, and, for this reason, my life itself has become its own life".
I was passing by them and without any effort I heard this conversation of Radha and Krishna. The mystery of being the flute is itself the mystery of finding the music. The key to find the self is in ending the ego.
What is religion? Religion is the door to life through the process of death.

44.
Friend, It is worth considering whether religion exists or not. Religion is meaningful not when it is merely in thought but when it is the very life, then alone it is meaningful. There is lot of religion in thoughts. But where does that religion lift up? It only drowns. Does any one ever start on a voyage of the sea on a boat of thoughts? But in the ocean of truth persons move out in the boat of thoughts alone! Then, if they are seen drowning near the shores what surprise could be there? Even a boat made of paper can take you much farther than the boat of thoughts; even that is a little more realistic. Thoughts are like dreams; they are not to be trusted.
If religion be in thought alone, nothing could be more untrue than that.
Because religion lives in scriptures alone, therefore it is dead.
Religion lives in words alone, and therefore it is inactive.
Religion lives only in sects, and therefore religion is not religion. Religion becomes life only when it lives in life.
Religion is true only if it lives in the breaths of life; and

where there is truth there is power, there is activity. Where there is activity there is life.
A prisoner died. A number of people collected near his dead body. They were not weeping. They were laughing. On seeing this, I also stopped with that crowd. The prisoner had served several terms of imprisonment, and there was hardly a crime that he had not committed. A major portion of his life had been spent in prisons. But that man had very religious thoughts. For the protection of religion, he had at least one stick always in his hand; and when he was not actually uttering abuses, he was saying 'Ram, Ram' with his hand on his moustaches. He always used to say: "Death is better than disgrace." This was his life's principle. Written in a religious way on a piece of paper, he had this principle enclosed in a talisman and tied to his arm; and not satisfied with this, when he last got out of the prison he got these words tattooed on both his arms. 'Ram Ram' was also tattooed on several spots on his body. His dead body was lying under the morning sunshine. His body was pronouncing his life and his two arms the philosophy of his life; and then alone I could understand why people around were not weeping and why they were laughing.
The state of man in the name of religion is also exactly similar.
I want to ask you whether in that state it is proper to weep or to laugh?

45.
What is life?
It is a pious yajna (sacrifice); but only for those who can sacrifice themselves for the sake of truth.

What is life?
A precious opportunity; but only for those who can muster up courage, determination and work hard.
What is life?
A challenge with boon; but only for those who accept it and who can face it.
What is life?
A great struggle; but only for those who can collect up all their power and fight for victory.
What is life?
A celestial awakening; but only for those who can fight against the sleep and unconsciousness of the self.
What is life?
A heavenly song; but only for those who have made themselves an instrument of God.
Otherwise, life is nothing but a protracted and slow death. Life becomes what we make it. Life is not found. It has to be won over.
Life is a constant release of the self by the self. It is not a fate, it is construction.
A lawyer angrily told a judge after his very long and boring argument: Sir, the jury is sleeping! " The judge said: "Friend; you yourself have put them to sleep. Kindly do something so that they would wake up. I have also narrowly escaped sleeping at times." If life be an experience of sleep then we should understand that we have done something so that it has gone to sleep. If life be an experience of pain, we should know that we have done something which has made it painful. Life is our own echo. It is our own reaction.

46.
It was a dark night of a rainy season. The sky was full of clouds. In between, the lightning produced thunder and shine. A young man was searching his way in the gleam of lightning. At last, he did reach the door of a hut where a very old beggar had been living for all his life. That old man had never gone out of that hut anywhere. And when somebody would ask him whether he had not seen the world at all he would say: "I have seen. it. I have seen it very well. Does not the world exist in the self?"
I also know that old man. He is also sitting within me. Truly, he has never left his abode. He is there and is the same person where he has all along been and what he is.
I also know that young man very well; because I am also that young man.
That young man kept standing on the stairs for some time. Then with a feeling of fear he slowly tapped the door. A voice asked from within: "Who is there? What are you searching for?"
That young man said: "I do not know who I am. But for several years, I have been wandering in search of happiness. I am searching for happiness and that search has brought me to your door". There was a laughter inside and the voice said: "How can he, who does not know even the self, find happiness? In that search, you cannot have darkness under the lamp. But even this knowledge that you do not know yourself is enough of knowledge; and therefore I open the door; but remember that with the opening of some one else's doors no doors actually open."
Then the door opened. In the streak of lightning the young man saw the beggar standing before him. His glamour was

unprecedented. But he was absolutely naked. In truth, beauty is always naked. Clothes come in only to cover ugliness. The young man sat down at his feet. He placed his head on the old man's feet and asked: "What is happiness? What is happiness?"

On hearing this the old man started laughing again and said:

"My dear, happiness lies in independence. As soon as you are independent there is an overflow of happiness. Leave my feet, leave everybody's feet. You are searching for happiness in dependence on some one else. This is a folly. You are searching outside. This is a folly. In fact, you are searching for it. This itself is a folly. He who exists outside can be searched. How can he who exists within the self be searched? Give up all search and see. It has all along been present within".

Then that old man took out two fruits from his bag and said: "I give you these two fruits. They are very wonderful fruits. If you eat the first one you can understand what happiness is; and if you eat the other one, you can yourself be happy. But you can eat only one of them; because as soon as you eat the one, the other will disappear; and remember that if you eat the other fruit, it cannot be understood what happiness is. Now the choice lies with you. Say what is your choice?"

That young man hesitated for a moment and then said: "I want to know the happiness first; because without knowing it how could it be found?"

That old beggar started laughing and said: "I can see why your search has become so long? This way, not only for years but for several lives, happiness cannot be found;

because the search for the knowledge of happiness is not the achievement of happiness. Knowledge of happiness and experience of happiness are the two opposite poles. Knowledge of happiness is not happiness. On the contrary, that is the pain. To know happiness and not to be happy yourself is the real misery. For this reason alone, man is more miserable than plants, animals and birds. But ignorance is also not happiness. That is only a reflection of misery. Happiness lies in transgressing both knowledge and ignorance. Ignorance is unconsciousness of misery. Knowledge is consciousness towards pain. Happiness is salvation from both knowledge and ignorance. The meaning of transgression of both knowledge and ignorance is salvation from the mind; and as soon as a person is free from the mind, he reverts to the self. That establishment in the self is happiness. That is salvation and that is also God.

47.

A friend became a saint. After becoming a saint he had come that day for the first time. I met him. Seeing him saffron-clad, I said: I was thinking that you had become a saint in truth. But what is this? Why have you coloured your clothes?" He smiled on my ignorance and said: "Saint has his own dress." On hearing this I started thinking and he said: "What is there to think about?" I said: It is a matter for deep thinking, because a saint should have no dress; and ;f he has a dress he is not a saint." Perhaps he did not understand what I said and he asked: "After all, a saint must wear something Or, do you want that a saint should remain naked?" I said: "There is no ban on wearing of clothes; there is no condition that one should not wear. The

question is about wearing something particular or insistence on wearing anything at all. Friend, the formality is not in clothes; but in insistence".
He said: "The dress keeps reminding that I am a saint."
Now it was my turn to laugh. I said: "It is not necessary to remember what I am. I have only to remember what I am not; and then is the saintliness which can be remembered only by clothes a saintliness at all? The clothes are very much on the surface and very thin. Even the skin is not deep enough. The flesh and the fat are also not very deep. Mind is also not very deep. Excepting the soul, there is no other depth which could become the abode of saintliness; and remember that those whose sight is on the surface, remain devoid of insight. Those who think of clothes, for that very reason, cannot think of the soul. What else is the world? World is the mind concentrated on clothes. He who can get free from clothes is the real saint".
Then I told him a story: "A man-in-fancy-dress went to the door of a king and said: 'I want five rupees as a gift' The king said: 'I can give a reward to the artist; but not a gift'. The man-in-fancy-dress smiled and went back. But while returning he said: "Oh king: I will accept the reward only if I could get the gift. Kindly remember this.' The incident passed off. After some days the news of the arrival of a wonderful saint spread like an electric current in the capital. Outside the city, a young saint sat in meditation. He would neither speak, nor open his eyes, nor move about. Crowds after crowds of people were arriving for a look at him. There were heaps of flowers, fruits, dry fruits and sweets near him. But he was in meditation and knew nothing about them. One day passed; another day passed; and the crowd

kept bulging. Third day morning, the king himself went to see him. He placed a lakh of gold coins at the feet of the saint and prayed for his blessings; but the saint was immobile like a rock. No temptation was capable of moving him. Even the king failed and returned to his palace. They were all shouting 'hail, hail' for the saint. But on the fourth day the people saw that the saint had disappeared in the night. That day that man-in-fancy-dress appeared in court of the king and said: 'You have already offered me a gift of one lakh gold coins; now my reward of Rs. 5/- may kindly be given to me'. The king was surprised. He told the man-in-fancy-dress: "You fool, why did you leave those one lakh gold coins? Now you are asking for Rs. 5/-. That man-in-fancy-dress said: 'Oh king; when you had not given the gift earlier, why should I have accepted the other gift? It is enough to get the reward of my own labour. Moreover, then I was a saint; may be I was a false saint, so what? It was necessary to maintain the dignity of the dress of a saint."

If you think over this story a number of things strike you: Men in fancy-dress can be saints. Why? Because in the so-called dress of the saints there is scope for fancy dress. Where dress is significant, it also provides opportunities for fancy dress. Then that man-in-fancy-dress was actually saint-minded, and therefore leaving a lakh of gold coins he was willing to accept only Rs. 5/-; but it will not be proper to expect all men in fancy-dress to be so saint-minded. The king was deceived because of the dress. Because the dress can deceive, therefore many deceivers have given prominence to dress; and when a person succeeds in deceiving others, then that success becomes a strong basis

for deceiving the self also. They say: "Truth alone triumphs". Truth conquers -- this is a very dangerous yardstick; because on account of this, the idea develops that whatever can win is true. Truth succeeds and then whatever succeeds is true -- mind does not take much time to reach that conclusion. Such saintliness is not true, as even the men in fancy-dress can adopt; because then no other action will be easier for the man-in-fancy-dress. If men in fancy-dress can be saints, saints could also be in fancy dress. In truth, there is no dress for a saint. Dress is meant for the men in fancy-dress and ;f there is no dress for a saint, there is no basis for the dignity of that dress. That memory is also not of the saint but only of the man-in-fancy-dress; but such memory could also be of that man-in-fancy-dress who knows himself to be in fancy dress. Those who have started thinking themselves to be saints on the basis of their external dress are merely 'Rams' of Ram lila'; but have imagined themselves to be Rams. I know one such Ram'. After wearing the dress of Ram in a 'Ram lila', he never puts off that dress. But people used to call him mad. Men in fancy-dress can become saints but when they start considering themselves as saints they are not only men-in-fancy-dress, they are mad.

48.

A monarch was drowned deep in worries up to the neck. When worries drown you, they do it full length; because by the way one of the worries enters, others also get in. He who permits entry to one also unconsciously offers the way to others. For this very reason, women come in crowds. No one ever meets one worry alone.

It is surprising that the monarchs are often drowned in worries although in fact only they are the monarchs who become free from all worries. The servitude of worry is so great that even the total power of a monarch cannot wash it off. Perhaps for the same reason, the powers of monarchies also stand in the service of worries.

A man wants to be a monarch for power and independence. But in the end, he finds that nobody is more powerless, dependent and unsuccessful than the monarch; because a person who wants to enslave others, ultimately becomes a slave of slaves himself. That which we want to bind, ultimately succeeds in binding us. For independence, not only freedom from slavery of others, but freedom even from the mentality to enslave others. is also essential.

That monarch was also enslaved like others. He had also started to conquer heavens; but after his victory he had found that he was seated on the throne of hell. Whatever the pride wins ultimately proves to be hell; and pride can never win heaven because heaven is where there is no pride. Now he wanted to be free from self-conquered hell. But it is difficult to attain heaven and easy to lose it; it is easy to reach the hell but difficult to lose it. He wanted to be free from the flames of worry. Who would not like to be so? Who would want to keep sitting on the throne of hell? But whoever wants to sit on a throne will have to sit only on the throne of hell; and remember there is no throne in heaven. Only the thrones of hell look like the thrones of heaven from a distance.

Day and night, sleeping or awake, that monarch was struggling against worries. But with one hand the individual removes his worries and with thousand hands he

himself invites them. That monarch had to be free from worries and also become a sovereign monarch. Perhaps he was thinking that after becoming a sovereign he could get rid of all worries. The folly of man keeps on drawing such conclusions. Therefore, he wanted new areas to rule everyday. The setting sun of the evening should not find the boundaries of his kingdom where the rising sun of the morning had found it. He was dreaming of silver and breathing in gold. For life such dreams and such breaths are very dangerous. because the dreams of silver become chains for the breaths and breaths in gold pour poison in the soul. The stupor resulting from the wine of ambition can be broken up only by death.

The afternoon of the monarchs life was over. Life was on the other side of the day. Death had started sending its messengers.

Strength was going down every day and worries were increasing. His life was in danger. What a man sows in youth, he reaps its harvest in old age. The seeds of poison do not trouble you at the time of sowing; they trouble you only when the harvest is reaped. Those who can see this misery in the seed itself do not sow it. You cannot get rid of the seed after it is sown; the harvest has to be cut. There is no escape from it. That monarch also stood in the midst of the harvest sown by himself. To escape it, he thought of even committing suicide. But the greed of being a monarch and the hope of being a universal monarch in future would not allow even that. Life he could loose; he had actually lost it; But it was beyond his power to give up monarchy. That desire itself was his life; and only such desires, as look like life, destroy the latter.

One day, to get rid of his worries he went over to the greenery at the foot of the hills; but it was more difficult to run away from worries than to run away from the funeral pyre. One may be able to run away from his funeral pyre but not from the worry because the funeral pyre is outside and the worry is inside. Whatever is inside is always with you. Wherever you are, it is there. Without changing the self from the very roots, there is no escape from it. The monarch was riding away in the forest. Suddenly he heard the tune of a flute There was something in the tune so that he suddenly stopped and turned his horse towards that music. Near a hilly fall, under the shade of a tree, a young shepherd was playing on the flute and dancing. The sheep were resting nearby. The monarch told him: "You appear to be so happy as though you have found monarchy?". That young man said: "please pray that God does not give me a monarchy; because at this moment I am a monarch but when monarchy is achieved nobody remains a monarch." The monarch was surprised and asked: "Let me hear what you possess which makes you a monarch?" That young man said: "It is not with wealth but independence that a person becomes a monarch. I have nothing except myself. I have myself with me and there is no wealth bigger than that, and then I am not able to think what is not with me but is with the monarch. I have eyes to see beauty, I have a heart to love and I have ability to enter into prayer. The light that the sun gives me is no less than the light he gives to a monarch; and the light that the moon showers on me is no less than what she showers on a monarch. The beautiful flowers blossom as much for us as for the monarch. The

monarch eats to his fill, and covers his body; I also do the same. Then what is there with a monarch which is not with me? perhaps the worries of a monarch. But may God save me from them.. A funeral pyre is better than worries. There are, on the other hand, many other things with me which are not with a monarch: my independence, my soul, my happiness, my dance, my music. I am happy with what I am; and therefore I am a monarch.
The monarch heard the views of the young man and said: "Dear young man, what you say is right Go and tell everybody in the village that the monarch also said the same thing."

49.
One morning I had just got up when a few persons arrived. They told me: "Some persons make several comments about you. One says you are an atheist; another says you are irreligious. Why do not you contradict all these useless remarks?" I said: "Whatever is useless does not call for a reply. Do not we ourselves make it significant when we accept it as worthy of contradiction?" On hearing this, one of them said: "But it is also not correct to allow wrong things to pass in the world". I said: "You are right. But those who must criticise and must indulge in calumny can never possibly be stopped. They are big inventors and can always find new ways. I will tell you a story in this connection and the story which I told them, I shall repeat for you."
It was a full moon night and the entire earth was drowned in bright moonlight. Shankar and Parvati, seated on their dear Nandi, started for a round. But as soon as they went

forward a little, a few persons met them on the way. Seeing them on the Nandi, those people said: "Look at the shameless ones; as if the bullock has no life both of them are seated on it." On hearing these remarks, Parvati got down and started moving on legs. But only a little distance ahead some others met. They said : "Oh how interesting! Making a delicate thing move on feet, who is this man going on the back of the bullock? There should be a limit to shamelessness." On hearing this, Shankar came down and put Parvati upon Nandi. They would have hardly gone a few steps further when some other people said: "What a shameless woman she is! She is making her husband move on feet and is herself seated on the bullock. Friends, the Kaliyug has set in." In these circumstances, both of them started going on feet by the side of Nandi. They would have moved only a few steps when some people said: "Look at these fools! They have such a strong bullock with them and are still going on feet." They were in great difficulty now. Shankar and Parvati had nothing left to do. They stopped Nandi under a tree and started thinking. Nandi was silent so far. Now he laughed and said: "Shall I tell you a way? Now, both of you lift me up on your heads." As soon as they heard it, Shankar and Parvati came back to their senses, and both of them got up on Nandi once again. Even then people passed and kept on saying something. In fact, how can people pass without saying something? But now Shankar and Parvati were enjoying their trip in the moonlight and were oblivious of the other persons passing by them.

In life, if you want to reach somewhere then it is suicidal to heed the words of everybody who meets you on the way.

In fact, a person whose opinion has any value will never express it without being asked.
Also remember that the movement of a person who does not act in his own discretion becomes like the movement of dry leaves flying with the force of the wind.

50.
A person went to Confucius and said: "I am very much tired. Now I want rest. Is there any way?" Confucius told him: "Life and rest are two contradictory words. If you want life do not ask for rest. Rest is death." That person developed wrinkles of worry on his forehead and he asked: "Then shall I not get rest at anytime?" Confucius said. "You will find it; You will definitely find it"; and pointing to the graveyard in front, he said: "Look at these graves. There is peace in them. There is rest in them".
I agree with Confucius. Life and death are not separate. They are like the moving breaths of that which exists. Neither life is merely action nor death is merely rest. In fact he who being in life is not in rest cannot be in peace even after death. Does not the restlessness of the day make restless also the sleep of the night? Will not the echoes of restlessness of the whole life cause pain after death? Death will be in that same pattern as the life. That is not opposed to life. It is only a complement of it. That there should be no inactivity in life is all right, because that is tantamount to being dead even when alive; but that life should be merely an action is also not correct. That is also not life. That is inaction. That is inactive mechanism. Life will be perfectly successful only if there is action on the circumference of it and inaction at the centre. Action on the

outside, peace within. Movement on the outside, calm within. A complete man is born only when a personality full of action is joined with peaceful soul. The life of such an individual is peaceful. His death also becomes salvation.

51.

I went to a meeting. It was a meeting of the untouchables. The very conception of an untouchable fills my heart with tears. On reaching there also, I was very unhappy and sad. What is it that man has done with man? And persons erecting uncrossable walls between man and man are also called religious! What greater fall of religion could be than this? And if this is religion, what is irreligion? It appears that the dens of irreligion have stolen the flags of religion; and the scriptures of satan have become the scriptures of God.

Religion is not separatist. It should unite. Religion is not dualistic; it is monistic. Religion lies not in erecting the walls but in demolishing them. But the so-called religions have been creating only divisions and erecting only walls. Their power has been active only in breaking up and dividing men. Surely, this has not been done without reason. In fact, without dividing man against man, neither can there be unions nor can there be exploitation. If manhood is similar and one, the main basis; of exploitation is finished; for exploitation inequality is unavoidable. Sects and castes are essential. For the same reason, religions in many forms have been supporters of inequality, sects and castes. A sectless and casteless society is automatically opposed to exploitation. To accept equality of men is to discard exploitation.

Then, without creating differences between man and man there can be no unions and religious sects. Division creates fear, jealousy and hatred and finally enmity. Enmity gives birth to religious sects; they are born of enmity and not friendship; not love, but hatred is their foundation stone. Unions are formed out of fear of enmity. Unions provide power. Power becomes strength for exploitation and also realization of the thirst for authority. On expansion, the same develops into a desire for monarchies. In the same way, religions secretly become politics. Religion moves in front and politics follows it. Religion remains only a cover and politics becomes the life. In fact, where there is union, there are religious sects, there then is no religion; there is only politics. Religion is deep application; that is not a union. In the name of separate religious unions, politics alone keeps on making moves. In the absence of union there can be religion, but there cannot be religions nor can there be worshippers, priests and their profession. God has also been converted into a profession. Several interests have got connected even with him. What can be more unseemly and irreligious than that? But the power of propaganda is unlimited and by constant propaganda even absolute untruths become truths. Then what wonder if the worshippers and priests who are themselves victims of exploitation should be supporters of the scheme of exploitation? Religions have served as strong pillars for the scheme of social exploitation. Having woven a net of imaginary principles, they have proved the exploiters as religious people and the exploited as the sinners. The exploited ones have been told that their suffering is the

result of their bad deeds. Truly, religions have given lot of opium to the people.

An old untouchable asked me after everyone else: "Can I go to the temples?"

I said: "To the temples? But what for? God himself never goes to the temples of priests."

There is no other temple of God except Nature. All the rest of temples and mosques are an invention of the priests. There is not even a distant relation of these temples with. God. God and priests have never been on talking terms. Temple is the creation of priests and priest is the creation of satan. They are disciples of satan. For this very reason, their scriptures and religious sects have been centres of putting man against man. They have talked of love but have spread the poison of hatred. Even then man is not beware of the priests; and whenever he thinks of God, he gets involved with the priests. The basic reason for the thinking of relations between man and God is only this. Priests have all along been busy in murdering God. Excepting them, there is no other murderer of God. If you have to choose God you cannot choose the priest. Both of them cannot be worshipped at the same time. As soon as the priest enters the temple, God goes out of it. In order to establish relation with God, it is necessary to get rid of the priest. That is the only obstacle between the devotee and God. Love does not tolerate any one in between. Nor does prayer tolerate any obstacle.

It was early in the morning. It was still dark. As soon as the door of a temple opened, an untouchable went to its steps and reached the door. He was about to step inside the door when the priest shouted in anger: "Stop, stop, you sinner; if

you proceed a step further, you will be completely destroyed. You have polluted the pious steps of the temple of God. The discouraged untouchable retraced his advancing step. Tears came in his eyes as if somebody had stabbed his heart which was thirsty for God. He wept and said: "Oh, God: what is that sin of mine on account of which I cannot see you?" The priest said on behalf of God: "You are polluted since your birth. You are a store-house of sins. " That untouchable prayed: "Then I will apply myself for purity. But I do not want to die without seeing God." And then for years that untouchable was untraceable. No one knew where he had gone away. People had almost forgotten him and then suddenly he came to the village one day. That temple was situated near the entrance of the village. The priest saw him going by the temple. There was an unprecedented lustre on his face. There was an unprecedented peace in his eyes. Even around his face there was a hallow of light. But he did not even lift his eyes towards the temple. He looked absolutely indifferent and disinterested about it. But the priest could not control himself. He called him and asked: "Hello; is your attempt for self-purification over?" That untouchable laughed at this and he moved his head in the affirmative. The priest asked him, "Then why do you not enter the temple?" That untouchable said: "Sir, what shall I do after coming? When God appeared before me, he said: "Why did you go to the temple in search of me? There is nothing there. I have myself never been to these temples; and even if I go, can the priest permit me to enter there?

A multi-millionaire constructed several temples. He is known to me, and with great expectation he has invested wealth in religion. He is a very shrewd businessman and is in the habit of making ten for one. Even in the business of religion he did not want to lag behind others. In fact, he was not in the habit of lagging behind. If he did not lag behind in wealth why should he do so in religion? In this world, he is in front of, and above, others; even for the other world he has made provision. Heaven is definite and, therefore, he is without care. Not only the earth, but even heaven can be purchased with money. That is why money is so important. Money is even above religion, because money cannot be purchased with religion but religion can definitely be purchased with money. When money can procure religion, the fear of collecting wealth through foul means also disappears. Otherwise, without foul means wealth cannot be collected. Wealth is basically a theft. Wealth is exploited blood. But in the Ganges of religion, all sins are washed; and the Ganges of religion starts flowing wherever the Bhagirath of wealth beckons. In this way, religion itself becomes the basis of irreligion.
But how can religion become the basis of irreligion? Surely, that religion is not religion. what can be purchased with wealth is not religion.

I have heard: one morning a rich man tapped at the doors of heaven. Chitragupta asked: "Brother, who are you?"
'I? Do you not know me? Has not the news of my death yet reached here?"
Chitragupta asked: "What is it that you want?"

The rich man said in anger: "Is it a thing to be asked? I want to enter heaven;" and saying so he took out from his coat a bundle of money and offered it to Chitragupta. At this Chitragupta laughed loudly and said: "Brother, the customs of your world cannot work here. Nor do these coins circulate here. Kindly keep your money back with you." After this, the rich man behaved absolutely poor and meek. The power which gave him force had proved absolutely without substance.

Chitragupta asked: "What action have you performed to deserve entry into heaven?"

After lot of searching the rich man said: "I gave ten paise in gift to an old woman."

Chitragupta immediately asked his co-worker: "Is this a truth?"

The co-worker looked into the file and said: "Yes sir. This is a truth.' Chitragupta asked the rich man again: "What else have you done?"

The rich man recollected again and said: "I gave five paise to an orphan."

The co-worker searched into his papers and found that this fact was also true.

Chitragupta asked: "Anything else?"

The rich man said: "That is all. I can remember only these two things."

Chitragupta asked his co-worker: "What should be done?"

The co-worker said: "fifteen paise may be returned and he should be sent to hell. Heaven is too cheap for 15 paise."

But can heaven be gained for more money? Paisa is after all paisa. Although by putting one on the other the heap may become larger but the paisa is after all paisa.
In fact, religion cannot be purchased in any way; neither for less money, nor for more, because the coin of money does not circulate in the world of religion. Religion cannot be purchased even through renunciation of wealth, because purchasing through renunciation of wealth is as good as purchasing through wealth. In the values of religion, money has no value. The very language of money is irrelevant for religion. Whatever can be purchased is not the form of the self. Religion is the form of the self and so also the heaven; they are not outside the self. They are always present in the self. One does not have to enter religion; but one has to wake up and know that one has all along been in religion. Just as a fish is in the sea, so are we in religion. But even though the fish is in the sea, in sleep it goes out of the sea. The same is our condition; to be in the world is to be in dream. Enjoyment and renunciation are all dreams. Palaces and temples are all dreams. Neither the palaces nor the temples built in dreams can bring awakening. The path of awakening is different. That is hidden in bringing back consciousness from the object of sight to the seer. The sleep is as sound as the thought is involved in the scene; and awakening comes as near as the thought moves back to the seer. When the thought comes back to the seer in its fulness, the scene and the seer all disappear; and the fulness that remains is religion. That is truth. That is salvation.

What is the first truth in the search for truth? For an individual to know himself as he is, is the first truth. This is the first step of the ladder. But in most of the ladders this first step itself is missing and, therefore, they remain ladders only in name; they cannot be used for climbing. If some one wants, they can be carried on shoulders; but it is impossible to climb up with their help.

Man deceives others, deceives himself and wants to deceive even God. Then in this attempt he gets himself lost. The smoke that blinds his eyes is created by himself.

Are our civilization, our culture and our religion not the beautiful names for similar deceptions? Have we not made a vain attempt to cover up our lack of civilization, culture and religion inside this smoke? And what has been the result? The result is that on account of this civilization itself we have not been able to become civilized; and because of this religion we have not been able to become religious; for untruth can never become the way to lead to truth. Truth itself is the door to truth. Only after giving up all self-deception can the way to truth become clear and unobstructed. It is essential to remember that ultimately you cannot deceive yourself. One day or the other, deceptions break up and the truths reveal. For this very reason, self-deception ultimately changes into self-remorse. But he who can understand it in advance will not repent.

Why do I want to deceive?

Does not fear exist behind all deceptions?

But does the main root of fear get destroyed by deceptions? On the contrary, those roots get buried on account of deception and they get down deeper. Thus they do not die; they become more lively and more powerful. For the same

reason, still bigger deceptions have to be invented to cover and hide them; and then an endless chain of deceptions starts in which cowardice gets on increasing and man becomes a small heap of meekness and cowardice. Then he starts fearing himself also. This fear becomes a hell.
In life, it is not proper to take on the cover of deceptions out of fear.
What is proper is to search for the root cause of fear. It is not necessary to suppress fear; it is necessary to uncover it. Salvation is impossible out of suppressed fear. Only after knowing it, after uncovering it, one can become free from fear.

For the same reason, I consider courage as the biggest religious quality. In the temple of life there is no door to enter from the rear. God welcomes him alone who struggles on with courage.
In a big city of England a drama of Shakespeare was being staged. It happened several years ago. At that time it was considered a sin for a gentlemen to see a drama; and the question of priests seeing it could not arise. Religion is after all their monopoly! But one priest was finding it impossible to evade the temptation of witnessing the drama. He found it the same way which we often employ in life. He wrote to the Manager of the theatre and asked: Can you manage my entry from the back door to the theatrical hall so that no one may be able to see me?" The manager sent a reply: "Sorry. There is no door here which is not visible to God."
I also want to tell you the same thing. There is no back-door for entry into the truth. God stands on all doors.

54.
The story relates to a journey. Some old men and women were going on a pilgrimage. A saint was also with them. I was listening to them. The saint was explaining to the party: "As a man thinks towards the end of his life, so is the aftermath of his life. He who has taken care of the end has taken care of everything. At the time of death, God must be remembered. There have been sinners who remembered the name of God by mistake at the time of their end and they are enjoying the pleasures of salvation today." The talk of the saint was producing the desired effect. These old persons were going on pilgrimage in their last moments and their hearts were overjoyed on hearing what they wished. Truly, the question was not of life, but of death; and to get rid of the sins of life it was enough to remember the name of God even if it were by mistake. In their case, it was not by mistake but by design that they were going on pilgrimage. Their happiness was natural, and in this feeling of happiness they were also serving the saint.
I was sitting just in front of them. On hearing the saint, I laughed; and the saint asked me in anger: "Don't you believe in religion?" I said: "Where is religion? Only the coins of irreligion are circulating here as religion and it is only bad coins that demand faith. Faith is demanded only where discretion is not favourable. The murder of discretion is faith. But neither the blind men are ready to accept that they are blind, nor are the faithfuls Ready to admit that they are blind followers. The conspiracy committed by the blind and their exploiters has almost cut the very roots of religion. There is show of religion and

practice of irreligion. Have you ever thought over what you have been telling these old persons? Whatever be the life, the thoughts must be pure at the end. Can there be any other thing more dishonest than this? Is it possible?The seed is the neem-seed; the tree is the neem-tree, and you want to reap fruits of mango Only the essence of life, which has passed, can appear before consciousness at the time of death. What is death? Is it not the fulfilment of life itself? How can it be in opposition to life? That is only a development of it. That is only the fruit of life. All the imaginary thoughts -- such as the story of the sinner Ajamil who at the time of death called for his son Narain and therefore by uttering the name of God by mistake became free of all sins and attained salvation -- will not work. What inventions will not the sinning and of man make? And the person who exploits these terrified people is always there. Then, is there really a name for God? Remembrance of God is merely a state of feeling. The state of feeling in which pride is eliminated is the proper state for remembrance of God. He alone who keeps shaking off the dust of pride from himself for the whole life can ultimately find the clear mirror of pridelessness. This can't happen by uttering some name by mistake. If somebody, believing some as God, keeps on searching Him for the whole life, even then his consciousness, instead of getting filled with the light, will be filled with ignorance. The mere repetition of a word does not awaken consciousness; it puts it to sleep. Then we do not know for what purpose Ajamil was calling his son Narain. The greater possibility is that finding the end of his life so close, he wanted to explain some unfinished plan of his life to him. In the last

moments, only the essence of one's own life comes before one's own consciousness, and that is the only thing that can come. Then I also narrated an incident to them.
An old shopkeeper lay on his death-bed. Around his bed sat the members of his family, all in sorrow. The old man suddenly opened his eyes and asked in great anxiety. "Is my wife here?"
His wife said: "Yes. I am Here."
"And my elder son?"
"He also"
"And the remaining five children?"
"They also"
"And the four daughters?
"They are also here. You need not worry. You may kindly lie down and rest", the wife said.
"What does it mean?" The dying man tried to sit up and said: "Then who is sitting in the shop?"

55.
Where is happiness?
You ask: "Where is happiness?"
I will tell you a story. That story contains the answer.
One day the people of this world had just got out of their sleep when they heard a strange announcement. Such announcement was never heard before that. But wherefrom that unprecedented announcement was coming was not understood. Its words were no doubt clear. Perhaps they were coming from the sky; or it may be that they were coming from within. The source of their origin was not clear to men.

"Oh, people of the world ! Here is a free gift of happiness from God; here is an unfailing opportunity for getting rid of pains! Today, at midnight, whoever wants to get rid of his pains should collect them in an imaginary bundle and throw them outside the village; and on return whatever happiness he desires, he should tie that up in the same bundle and return home before sunrise. In place of his pains, happiness will come. He who fails to avail of this opportunity will fail for ever. This is the descent of desire-yielding tree on this earth for one night. Trust and get the fruit. Trust is fruitful."

This announcement kept on repeating that day till sunset. As the night approached, even the sceptics developed faith. Who could be so foolish as to miss this opportunity? Then, who was there who had no pains, and who was there who had no desire for happiness? Every one started bundling up his pains. Everyone had only one care that none of the pains should be left behind. By the time midnight approached, all houses in the world were empty and innumerable persons with bundles of their pains were going, like a row of ants, outside the town. They went farther and farther to throw off their pains lest they should come back; and after midnight, like mad people, they all started collecting happiness in haste. Every one was in haste lest it should be morning and some happiness be left untied in bundle. Pleasures were many and the time was so limited. Even so, somehow after collecting all happiness, people ran and reached their homes near about the sunrise. On reaching home they saw and they were not able to trust their own eyes. In place of huts there were palaces, kissing the sky. Everything was golden. There was a rain of

happiness. Whatever was wanted became available to them. This surprise was there. But there was a bigger surprise. Even after finding all this, people had no happiness on their faces. The happiness of the neighbours was giving pain to all of them. The old pains had disappeared; but in their place entirely new pains and worries had come with them. The pains had changed, but the minds were the same and therefore they were unhappy. The world had changed, but the persons were the same; and, therefore, everything was the same. There was. of course, one person who had not accepted the invitation to surrender pain and collect happiness. He was a naked beggar. He had poverty and mere poverty, and taking pity on his ignorance everyone had asked him to come. When the king himself was going that beggar should also have gone. But he laughed and said : " Whatever is outside is not happiness and where shall I go to search for what is within? I have found that out after giving up all search. People laughed at his ignorance and also felt sorry. They considered him an absolute fool and when their huts had been converted into palaces and the gems were scattered like pebbles and stones in front of their houses, they told that beggar: "Have you not realised your mistake even now?" But the beggar laughed again and said: "I was thinking of asking the same question from all of you?"

56.

I was sitting by the side of a dying man of 84. He had all the diseases which one person could have at one time. For a long time, he had been putting up with intolerable pain. At last, his eyes had also been lost. In between, he would also

get fainted. He had not got out of the bed for several years. There was pain and pain. But even in that condition he wanted to live. Death was not acceptable to him even now. Even though the life be the death incarnate, no one ever wants death. Why is the love of life so blind and so imperfect? How much does this desire to live force you to tolerate? What is this fear of death?

And how can there be fear from death whom man does not even know? There could be fear of the known alone. Why should there be fear from the unknown? There can only be a desire to know that.

The old man would start weeping before whosoever went to see him. There was complaint after complaint. Complaint does not die even up to the moment of death. Perhaps it keeps company even after death.

He had become disgusted with all kinds of physicians; but he had not yet given up hope

With the help of some talisman, he still hoped to live on.

I found him alone and asked him: "Do you still want to live on?" Surely he got startled.

He must have thought what an inauspicious thing I had asked. Then, with great pain he said: "Now there is only one prayer to God that he may take me away." But the untruth of what he was saying was visible in every bit of his face.

I remember a story. There was a woodcutter. He was meek, poor, unhappy and old. He could not cut enough woods now even to fill up his belly. The strength of his life was diminishing every day. There was nobody in the world connected with him. One day, after cutting the wood in the forest he was tying them. At the same time, he uttered:

"Even death does not come to my rescue to save me from the painful life in this old age." But as soon as these words came out, he felt some one standing behind him. Some invisible and very cold hand was also on his shoulder. His body and breath all trembled. He turned and saw; there was nobody there. Even then somebody was surely there. The weight of the cold hand was clear on his shoulder. Before he could speak, that invisible power herself spoke out: "I am death. Tell me what shall I do for you?" That old wood-cutter lost his speech.

It was winter season, but his body started sweating profusely. Somehow, he mustered up courage and said: "Oh Goddess, take pity on this poor man. What have you to do with me?" Death said: "I am present because you remembered me". That wood-cutter collected himself and said 'Forgive me. I forgot that. Kindly help me in lifting this bundle of wood. I had called you for that only; and, in future, either I will not call you or if by mistake I ever call you, you need not come. By God's grace, I am very happy." He was just thinking about it when somebody came and told that old man: "A beggar has come. There are lots of stories about his miraculous powers. Shall I call him to see you . ' The old man got back a ray of happiness on his face and he somehow got up, sat down and said: "Where is the beggar? Call him quickly. After all I am not so very sick. In fact, only the doctors are killing me. God wants to save me, and therefore in spite of them I am there. Who can kill me whom God wants to save?

Then I took leave, but I had just reached home when I got the news that the old man was no more in the world.

57.

A multi-millionaire got a palace constructed. That palace was completed towards the end of his life. This is what often happens. The person for whose residence a palace is built is often finished in the process of its construction. They want to construct residence; but graves are constructed. The same thing had happened. The palace had been constructed but the constructor was near the end. But the palace was without comparison. Ego requires only incomparability, for that alone man loses even his conscience. Pride can experience the existence of the self only by being the first among the non-existent. It can experience the existence of the self only by being the first. That palace was incomparable in all respects -- in beauty, in architecture in convenience; and the feet of that multi-millionaire were not touching the ground. The entire capital talked of him. Whoever saw the palace felt spell-bound. At last, the king himself came to see it. He also could not believe his eyes. Even his own palaces looked inferior. Within himself, he felt jealous; but outwardly he praised it. The multi-millionaire actually considered his jealousy as a praise. Feeling obliged for the appreciation given by the king, he said: "It is all God s grace." But in his own heart he knew that it was all his effort. Bidding good-bye to the king, he told him at the gate: "I have made only one gate to the palace. In this type of palace that is impossible. Whether somebody enters or goes out it is inevitable for him to go through this very gate." An old man also stood in the crowd at the gate. Hearing the words of the rich man, he laughed loudly. The king said to him: "Why do you laugh?" He said: "I can tell the reason only in the ears of the rich

man." Then he went to the master of the house and whispered in his ear: "I laughed only on hearing the praise of the door of the palace. In this entire palace that is the only defect. Death will come from the same gate and will take you out. If that gate was also not there, that would be all right."

Man constructs palaces of life also. In all of them the same defect exists. For this reason alone, no house proves to be a perfect residence. In all of them, there remains at least One gate and that gate itself becomes the door of death.

But is it not possible to have such a residence for life in which no door for death is there?"

Yes; it is possible.

But that house has no walls. It has doors and only doors, and because there are doors and doors alone, the doors remain invisible.

And death can enter only where there is door. Where there are only doors and doors, there the door does not exist.

Pride creates walls in life. Then for the entry and exit of the self it has to keep at least one door; this is the door of death.

The house of pride cannot remain free from death. One door always remains in it; that itself is the said door. Even if it does not leave that one door, then too it will die. That will be suicide.

But there is life without pride also. That life is immortal; because it has no door for the death to enter. Nor are there walls to surround death.

Where there is no pride there is soul.

Soul is unbound and unending like the sky; and what is unbound and unending is immortal.

58.

I was a guest in a small village. The village was small; but it had a temple, it had a mosque and it had a church also. People were religious and by the day-dawn they would all go to their places of worship. Even at night they would sleep only after returning from the places of worship. There were religious festivities also day after day. But the life of the village was similar to the life of other villages. Religion and life did not appear to be touching each other. life had its own way and religion had its own. They were both running parallel; and, therefore, the question of their meeting on either side did not arise. As a result, religion became lifeless and life without religion What happens all over the earth happened in that village also. I went to the places of worship for a day or two each; and I tried to peep into the hearts of the so-called devotees and priests of God. I searched into their eyes. I dug into their prayers. I talked to them. I probed into their life. I saw their coming and going, sitting up and down, I went to the house of some of them. I asked their neighbours about them. I heard the devotees of one God about the devotees of the other God. I collected information from the priests of one temple about the priests of other temples. I discussed with the learned persons of one religion about the learned persons of other religions. I came to the conclusion that religious-looking village was absolutely irreligious. There was a cover of religion and life of irreligion. Only for the life of irreligion the cover of religion is needed. Are not the places of worship meant only to hide the places of murder? The priests of God have nothing to do with God himself. They

certainly wanted to preserve God because God brought them money; and the devotees of God also had no love for God. They were searching for safety from fears of the world, from God; and they were praying to him to help them to achieve the temptations of the world. Those whose present life was about to be extinguished wanted assurance from Him for the future. Every one loved merely comforts and enjoyments. Because their love was with the world; therefore none of their prayers was in fact a prayer to God. In their prayers, they were asking for everything else except God; and, in fact, as long as there is a demand in prayer, the prayer is not meant for God. A prayer becomes areal prayer only when it is free from dem ands. Even if there be a demand for God, that prayer does not remain a prayer of God. Only when completely free from all demands, prayer contains God. Surely, such a prayer cannot be a praise. Praise is not prayer; it is flattery. Praise is bribery. It is not only manifestation of a low mind, it is also a deception meant for God; and what could be a bigger foolishness than deceiving God? That way man is deceived by himself. Friend, prayer is no demand. It is love. It is self-surrender. Prayer is not praise. That is a very deep state of feeling of gratitude: And where there is intensity of feeling there are no words.

Prayer is not speech; it is silence; it is dedication to infinity. It is not word; it is the music of infinity. That music starts where the other tunes end.

Prayer is not worship; nor is there any place of worship for prayer. It has nothing to do with the outside world. It has no relation to others. It is the innermost awakening of the self.

Prayer is not action; it is consciousness. It is not doing; it is being.
Only the birth of love is necessary for prayer. For that even the conception of God is unnecessary; it is even obstructive. Where there is prayer there is God; but where there is merely a conception of God there, because of that conception itself, God is unable to be present.
Truth is one. God is one. But untruths are many, conceptions are many; and, therefore, temples are many. For the same reason, to reach God temples become not the doors but the walls.
He who has not found the temple of God in love, can find God in no other temple.
What is love? Is it an attachment to God? Attachment is not love. Where there is attachment there is exploitation. In attachment, someone else is the object; subject is the self; and in love, in fact, the other one does not exist. Relation to some other is a relation involving ego; and where there is ego, there is no God. Love just exists. It is not for some one. It is just there. Where love is for some one, there it is delusion; it is attachment; it is desire_ When love is only itself, then it is not desire. it is prayer. Desire is like rivers flowing towards the ocean; love is like the ocean. It has no flow towards any one. It is only the self. It has no attraction to any one; but exists in itself and, like the ocean, it is also prayer. Desire is the flow, the pull and the tension. Prayer is a state. Prayer is peace in itself.

There is attraction between love and perfection, without any reason, without being seen, and without being goaded.

I call the love of this type as prayer.
Otherwise, all our prayers are untrue, self-deceptions.

A prisoner who was condemned to be hanged came to a prison. Very soon the entire prison resounded with his devotion to God. Before the day dawned, his worship and prayer would start. His love for God was unbounded. A non-stop stream of tears also flowed from his eyes at the time of prayer. The feeling aroused by separation, created by the love of God, was there in every word of his song. He was a devotee af God, and the other prisoners became his devotees. The superintendent of the prison, and other officials too, started giving him due respect. His routine of praying to God continued almost day and night. His lips would utter "Ram Ram" while sitting up, sitting down, or moving. The beads of rosary were turning in his hand. Even his upper cloth had 'Ram Ram' printed on it. Whenever the superintendent of the prison came for inspection, he found him busy in meditation. But one day, when he came, he found that the day had sufficiently advanced and that prisoner was sleeping soundly. His upper cloth, bearing Ram Ram, and his rosary were also lying neglected in a corner. The superintendent thought that he was perhaps not feeling well. But on asking the other prisoners he came to know that his health was all right; but who knows why the prayer of God had stopped since previous. evening The superintendent woke up the prisoner and asked: "The dawn is long past. Have you not to worship and pray in the morning?" The prisoner said: worship and pray? What worship and prayer now? I have received a letter from home only yesterday that the death punishment has been

converted into imprisonment for seven years. Whatever I wanted to be performed by God, has been completed. It is no longer desirable to bother that poor chap for nothing."

59.

Who can prevent man from reaching God? .And who can tie up man to the earth?

What is that power which does not allow the river of life to reach the ocean?

I say: The man himself. The weight of his ego does not allow him to rise above. It is not the gravitation of earth but the stone-weight of his ego which does not allow him to go up. We are buried under our own weight and have become incapable of movement. The earth has no power beyond the body; its gravity binds it; but pride has tied down even the soul to this earth. Its very weight has become the inability and lack of power for the soul to rise up to God. This body is made of earth. It is born out of it, and it gets merged into it. But the soul is deprived of God, because of the ego. Unnecessarily, it is compelled to follow the body.

If the soul cannot reach God, life gets converted into an intolerable pain. God alone is its fulfilment. He alone is its fullest manifestation; and where there is obstruction in fulfilment there is pain. Where there is obstruction in the possibilities of the self becoming the truth, there is pain; because full manifestation of the self itself is happiness.

Do you see that? Do you see that lamp? it is a dead lamp of earth. But the flame in it is immortal. The lamp is from the earth, but the flame is from the sky. What belongs to the earth stays on the earth, but the flame is constantly running towards the unknown sky. Similar is the body of man,

made of earth. But the soul is not made of earth. That is not the dead lamp. It is the immortal flame. On account of the weight of ego that also cannot rise above the earth.
Those alone find progress towards God, who are in all respects weightless from the self.
I have heard a story.
On a very inaccessible and high mountain, there was a golden temple of God. The priest of that temple had become old and he had announced that whoever was the most powerful among mankind would be appointed as the new priest. There was no bigger luck than appointment to that position. On the appointed day, the powerful candidates started climbing the hill. Whoever first reached the temple, situated on the top of the hill, will surely prove himself most powerful. At the time of starting the climb, every competitor carried a stone on his shoulder which was indicative of his strength. Every person carried on his shoulder a stone as he thought he had power. It was a difficult climb lasting for a month. There was a danger of several losing their lives. Perhaps for the same reason, there was an attraction and also a challenge. Hundreds of people started to test their own luck and effort. As the days passed by, several climbers were left behind. Some of them had fallen into pits and valleys with their stones; some of them had left the world with their stones on account of labour and tiresomeness. Even then, the tired and the withered, who were left, moved on with an insuppressible desire. The movers-on had no time for thinking about those who were falling, nor had the facility to do so. But one day all climbers saw with surprise that the person who had been left behind all was coming up and moving ahead of all with

speed. He carried no stone on his shoulder to show his strength. Surely, this weightlessness itself was responsible for his swift speed. He had thrown away his stone somewhere. They all started laughing at his foolishness; because what could be the purpose of reaching the hill top if a person was devoid of the sign of his strength? Then, when after the difficult and painful climb of several months, the climbers slowly reached the temple of God, they could not believe their eyes on seeing that the same low-strength companion, who had thrown away his sign of strength and had reached the temple first of all, had been made the priest of the temple. But before they could complain against this injustice, the old priest welcomed them all, and said: "Only he who has become free from the weight of his ego is entitled to enter the temple of God. This young man has given proof of entirely new strength. The stone-weight in the shape of ego is not really strength. And I respectfully ask you all: Who gave you the idea of carrying the stones on your shoulders before you started climbing, and when did he do so?